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Modern
Individuality in
Hegel's Practical
Philosophy

By
Erzsébet Rózsa

Modern Individuality in Hegel's
Practical Philosophy

Critical Studies in German Idealism

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By
Erzsébet Rózsa

Translated by
Tamás Nyirkos



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In memoriam Manfred Riedel

All that holds human life together, all that has value
and validity, is spiritual in nature
(Hegel)

worauf es ankam, war [...] die negativen und positiven
Vorurteile gegen und für Hegel [...] in der Wieder-
begegnung mit dem authentischen Denken Hegels zu
nötigen
(Gadamer)

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VOLUME FOREWORD

For some, Hegel is the ultimate thinker of identity, mostly followed by the observation that identity philosophy has to be overcome and replaced by (postmodern) philosophies of difference. The book *Modern Individuality in Hegel's Practical Philosophy* convincingly shows that this kind of contradiction is much too simplistic. The author argues that *modern* individuality in Hegel is a problematic identity, an identity which does not immediately present itself, but rather has to be reconstructed. In this reconstruction, modern individuality appears as a multi-layered identity which only becomes accessible if it is considered from the many points of view which Hegel offers to us. These points of view are ordered in three parts: the manifold of individuality's moments in the entirety of Hegel's system; the ongoing crisis of modern individuality which finds itself challenged to reconcile contradictory developments; and modern individuality's relation to art and religion, in which it remains uncertain what wins: the relativization of modern individuality or its absolutization.

This book rightly can be called a critical reception of Hegelian thought. Not because Hegel's point of departure is fundamentally discussed, but rather because Hegel is reread with the highest precision and in full consciousness of the problems with which the contemporary individuals are faced. The result is a highly differentiated and nuanced concept of individuality: not as a conclusion, but rather as an invitation to think it through for yourself.

Paul Cobben, Series Editor
Tilburg University, The Netherlands

HEGEL'S WORKS IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- A *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*. Translated by T. M. Knox. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- D *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*. Translated by H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
- F *Faith and Knowledge*. Translated by Walter Cerf. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
- GL *The Science of Logic*. Translated by George di Giovanni. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- HP *Lectures on the History of Philosophy. The Lectures of 1825–1826*. Volume III. Translated by R. F. Brown and J. M. Stewart. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- N *Philosophy of Nature*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
- P *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- PR *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. Translated by R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson and J. M. Stewart. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
- R *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Translated by H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- S *The Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*. Book III. *Philosophy of Mind/Spirit*. Translated by William Wallace.
- SL *Logic. Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of The Philosophical Sciences*. Translated by William Wallace.
- WH *The Philosophy of History*. Translated by J. Sibree. Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001.

IN GERMAN

Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum, in *Frühe Schriften. Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Bd. 1. Edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986.

Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften, in *Werke*, Bd. 4.

Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, in *Werke*, Bd. 7.

Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin, in *Werke*, Bd. 10.

Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie. Einleitung. Bd. 1. Edited by Walter Jaeschke. Hamburg: Meiner, 1993.

Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion. Manuskript von 1821. Einleitung. Bd. 1. Edited by Walter Jaeschke. Hamburg: Meiner, 1993.

Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion. Manuskript von 1821. Die vollendete Religion. Bd. 3. Edited by Walter Jaeschke. Hamburg: Meiner, 1995.

FOREWORD

In her study *Reconciliation and System* (*Versöhnung und System*), Erzsébet Rózsa characterized her Hegel-research as a “constant, ongoing battle with Hegel’s philosophy.” Fruits of this never ending conflict, which at the same time expresses a deep and even for herself “not always explicable obligation to Hegel’s philosophy” can be found in abundance in her new study *Modern Individuality in Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*. Reading it is worthwhile even if, as she puts it, “this book may disappoint those who expect easy access to the Hegelian topic of individuality” (295). For, although the Hegelian philosophical system does not take centre place in her new book, it does take up and expound on the important thought motives from Rózsa’s study *Hegel’s Conception of Practical Individuality*, so the reader will surely not be spared the work on the concept in *Modern Individuality in Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*, either.

Even for those who have studied philosophy in Germany during recent decades, the way to Hegel is by no means easy. But here Hegel belongs to the canon of philosophical classics and applying oneself to him is somehow a matter of course. If one is not put off by the idiosyncrasy of his language, the complexity of his argumentation and the frequent strangeness of his theses, but rather, takes these characteristics of Hegel as a provocation to study his works with more intensity, one may be able to explain to oneself and others why his works can exert fascination. From there it is no longer so far to the commitment to his philosophy of which Rózsa speaks, for, as a rule, the identification with a philosophy increases – if it is rewarded with philosophical insights – with the effort of its acquisition.

In Erzsébet Rózsa’s case, however, such attempts at explication fall short in critical respects. Mindful of the painful aspects of the historical experiences that associate Hungary with Germany in the first half of the twentieth century, the deep empathy with German philosophy in general that pervades Rózsa’s entire philosophical works is indeed remarkable. Even more impressive is her great sympathy with Hegel’s philosophy in particular: bearing in mind that this author was philosophically socialized under a dictatorship that was a variant of actually existing socialism, and bearing in mind that Hegel has been assigned a quite specific role in the philosophical self-understanding of that state ideology, it is amazing that Rózsa has put precisely Hegel’s works at the centre of her own philosophizing. The fact that practical Hungarian philosophy was familiar with a

somewhat different Hegel than that of official Marxism-Leninism makes little difference. Even the fact that the Hegelian philosophy one can discover in his works is actually of a completely different nature from the one the officially required interpretation wanted to go for cannot weaken the astonishment at the intensity of Rózsa's conflict with Hegel. For this Hegel first has to be assimilated in depth. So there could indeed have been good reasons and clarifying circumstances for a Hungarian philosopher not to grapple with Hegel's philosophy, and not to mention the linguistic and conceptual problem of the "grotesque craggy melody" Karl Marx once spoke of with reference to Hegel's works, meaning the problem that Hegel himself did not make it easy for his readers to access the substance of his philosophy.

Like no philosopher before him, Hegel made the fact of the irreversibility of individual autonomy the starting point of his philosophy, perceived the deep ambivalences of the modern conception of individuality, and faced them in a profoundly radical way. The longing for reconciliation, already a central thought motive of the young Hegel, arises from his experience of the disruptions and tensions that invariably accompany modern life. His increasing sobriety during the course of his intellectual development and his progressively tenacious realism led Hegel to transfer the ideal of reunion to the program of a conciliation of the individual with a fragile and conflicting reality. As Rózsa's differentiated analyses in this book effectively verify, Hegel is fully aware of the complexity of modern life and therewith also of the corresponding complexity of modern individuality.

Notwithstanding the tensions and disruptions in modernity, Hegel held firm to the ideal of unity and the reconciliation of the particular and the universal. Right up to the end, despite his never quite extinguishing self-doubt of the success of his philosophical endeavors, he insisted that in view of the fragility and complexity of modern life one must not slide into a postmodern arbitrariness in which the claim of rational coping with modernity is relinquished in favor of romantic individualizing.

It is – and this is the basic pragmatic insight of Rózsa's deliberations – not just a case of a theoretical management of reality by philosophical means, but always also a reflection on the practical contribution the social institutions (or guises of the absolute spirit) studied by Hegel confer on the formation of the individual. This dual perspective forces reflection on the dual character of philosophy itself. Philosophy is at the same time both a reflecting penetration of the complexity of modernity and practical in the sense that its insights provide the modern subject with the founda-

tions for self-understanding and life quality and alone enable the history of an individually and socially successful life to be written via the “prose of modern freedom.”

This practical dimension cannot be thematized directly within the system: its conciliatory character must be shown. For this reason, the main focus of *Modern Individuality in Hegel's Practical Philosophy* is also, as Rózsa writes, “a field of topics pushed to the margin by systematic structure and conceptuality (or so it seems): *the existential, moral, cultural (artistic, religious, philosophical) reflective and self-reflective forms and ways of the modern individual's existence; the contexts and ‘determinations’ of the individual's ‘personal being,’ ‘particular existence’ and concrete lifeworld in modernity*” (295). But this should not lead to the false conclusion that this practical dimension of practical philosophy were marginal. Anyone who has read this book – and Rózsa's other works on Hegel – will no longer fall prey to this misconception.

Rózsa's interpretation clearly reveals the unflinching realism that characterizes Hegel's analysis of the moderns and modern individuality: every conciliation by the subject with his social world includes the insight that one cannot completely get rid of the tensions and disruptions in one's own life. According to Hegel, this cannot succeed either through the ascent into artistic or religious spheres or through the pursuit of a political utopia that wants to coerce the intact reunion of the particular and the universal into the sphere of the objective mind. In view of the failure of Marxist socialism one can guess why this aspect of Hegel's thought could be attractive to Rózsa and have a potential for self-understanding. But it is still amazing how she herself can – especially in the Hungary of present times – agree with the thesis accompanying Hegel's theory, in which the basic attitude of the subject should be one of trust rather than mistrust in his social institutions. Possibly both are to be found in this train of Hegelian thought: the reason for her sympathy and the source of her unabating conflict with Hegel?

All philosophizing is also always self-understanding, both about one's own time and about one's own philosophizing. Philosophical classicists are those whose perusal inevitably provokes philosophical self-understanding. They are such for as long as they can contribute to the conceptual penetration of the reader's own historical context. *Modern Individuality in Hegel's Practical Philosophy* confirms impressively that Hegel is still a classicist today and cannot be relegated like a “dead man” to a philosophical history book. Moreover, practical philosophizing is at the same time philosophizing about our practice and conscious intervention therein.

As Rózsa shows in detail, Hegel himself understood his entire philosophizing in this sense as an active contribution to enabling successful life. Such a practical dimension does not necessarily have to take on the head-on form of a “criticism in the fray,” as which the young Marx wanted to declare philosophy. Like Hegel, Rózsa chooses the path of differentiated analysis of the complex structure of modern individuality in her philosophical works. Her goal is to identify that attitude of the modern individual by the sole means of which a good life can succeed in modern times, despite its characteristic fluctuations, tensions and the fragility associated therewith. In view of such phenomena as insufficient identification with the universal, lack of political enthusiasm, or the widespread reduction of the concept of successful life to consumption and the satisfaction of private interests, Rózsa’s reconstruction of Hegel’s practical philosophy outlines a counter-model. The Hungarian philosopher does not place this practical dimension of her self-understanding about Hegel’s philosophy in the foreground; so at this point the political dimension of Erzsébet Rózsa’s preoccupation with Hegel’s system should be explicitly emphasized. In her new book she herself formulates the sentence that decisively characterizes her research; for this reason I will conclude this short preface with a quotation:

My life-long interest (“inter-esse”) in Hegel’s works, his motives and topics regarding individuality, freedom, and the problems of it in modernity is no ranting declaration on my side, but a motive and attachment that penetrates my own life in a literal sense. The present book has some features of a *personal confession*. (297)

Michael Quante (Münster)

PART A

INDIVIDUALITY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF HEGEL'S THEORY OF
MODERNITY AND THE DIMENSIONS OF THE SYSTEM

CHAPTER ONE

INDIVIDUALITY IN THE HEGELIAN CONCEPT OF MODERNITY

The right of the subject's *particularity* to find satisfaction, or – to put it differently – the right of *subjective freedom*, is the pivotal and focal point in the difference between *antiquity* and the *modern age*. This right, in its infinity, is expressed in Christianity, and it has become the universal and actual principle of a new form of the world.¹

The modern world is this essential power of connection, and it implies the fact that it is clearly necessary for the individual to enter into these relations of external existence...²

It is our absolute instinct to find a firm compass in ourselves, immanent within human spirit. Human spirit needs to have such a firm point [...] if it wants to be free at least in its own world.³

1. THE QUESTION OF MODERN INDIVIDUALITY ON THE POINTS OF INTERSECTION OF SYSTEM, CONCEPTUALITY, AND PHENOMENALITY

What seemed unthinkable a few decades ago has since become a commonplace: Hegel is one of the great thinkers of modernity. Often mentioned among the merits of the Hegelian diagnosis of modernity is its focus on the analysis of the historical process which brought about radical changes and which established on the whole a previously unknown formation of social life in Western civilization.

He pointed out how this new formation he called “newer age” and “modern age” (“neure Zeit,” “moderne Zeit”) developed certain phenomena and structural elements that present either advantageous or harmful elements for humanity, the primary subject of the Hegelian philosophy of history. The self-fulfilling and simultaneously self-destructive nature of

¹ R, 151 (§ 124).

² *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Part Three, Introduction.

³ *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Part Three, Section Two, Chapter III, C. 3. c.

these phenomena and structural elements explain the notion of the “end of history.” The rich and profound character of Hegel’s analysis of ever-more complex and controversial historical developments indicates that this is no empty phrase or sheer fantasy.⁴

In Hegel’s view, modernity is not simply one of the historical epochs the (re)construction of which is the task of any philosophy that lays claim to conceptual generality and historical universality. It is an entity that has never existed before and has an overall inclination to go to extremes. In the social sphere, these extremes include the growing contrast between wealth and poverty, the excesses of luxurious consumption and lumpen mentality; in politics, terror and abuse of publicity, anomalies in the administration of justice, the violation or even annihilation of individual rights; in the private sphere, the dissolution of traditional norms and forms of cohabitation. However, in spite of its dangers, Hegel was committed to modernity. His remedy for the destructive tendencies threatening the very existence of modern society was what he called the principle of *equilibrium*. The frames and forms of realizing this principle were the system of institutionally secured individual liberties, as well as reconciliation and mutual recognition as a model for practical conduct. At the same time, however, he realized that this equilibrium would be increasingly difficult to reach in a modern age filled with collisions. Consequently, both institutions and individuals were liable to pursue excessive power. In other words, Hegel foresaw *the grave and virtually insoluble problem of modern societies that result from the endangered equilibrium of system-building elements*. His views on the predominance of civil society and state in the modern age, the rise of consumer mentality, the effects of mass society on individual attitudes, pauperization, the spread of lumpen mentality, the increase of political terror and religious fanaticism on the one hand, as well as the growing self-assurance and extremism of modern individuality on the other, were verified by classic and even more by later modernity.⁵

⁴ The Hegelian notion of the end of history was picked up by Francis Fukuyama to describe the changes that had taken place in the world during the last couple of decades. See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992). The validity of his argument concerning the global victory of liberal democracy is heavily disputed in the face of some more recent economic and political developments. Hegel’s philosophy of history has become relevant in another way: “world spirit” does not seem to reside in Europe or America (which Hegel still saw as the “country of the future”) any more, but moves on to other continents.

⁵ For a more detailed discussion see chapters B.II. and III.

It is of special importance that Hegel treated these phenomena and the novelty of modernity not only in a historical and conceptual-systematic way, but also from the perspective of human life as individual life.⁶ While this aspect of his conception has been largely overlooked,⁷ it is this perspective that can inspire present discussions on the nature of human life as individual existence, with its possibilities and its limitations. Here belongs one of the central topics of the American Hegel renaissance: the question of practice.⁸ We can also mention the current debates in applied ethics – bioethics included – which Hegel's philosophy can fertilize.⁹

Disregard of Hegel's theory of individuality is not completely incomprehensible, though: the "subjective" aspects of the structures of modernity, especially in the mature Hegel, are not self-evident or directly traceable in the texts. *There is no single, definite passage in Hegel's works that we can point to as the locus of modern individuality.* Not only because the theory of modern individuality is *not* the thematic centre of the oeuvre, but also because it is *not* in the architectonic centre of the system. If we only focused on the external structure of *practical philosophy* (the main target of the present work) as it is immediately given in the system, i.e.

⁶ This is the basic motive of my own interpretation of Hegel, summarized in Erzsébet Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System: Zu Grundmotiven von Hegels praktischer Philosophie* (München: Fink, 2005) and Erzsébet Rózsa, *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität: Von der Phänomenologie des Geistes zum enzyklopädischen System* (Paderborn: Mentis, 2007).

⁷ This statement is true of Hegel even if Siep emphasizes subjectivity as the central notion of German idealism, serving as the foundation of theoretical and practical philosophy. Cf. Ludwig Siep, *Praktische Philosophie im Deutschen Idealismus* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992), 8.

⁸ To treat the Hegelian theory of modernity as a "modern life-project" gives a theoretical opportunity to link modernity with the perspective of individual life. Pinkard speaks of the Hegelian "life-project" in connection with the *Phenomenology*. Cf. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge 1994), 79–134 and 269–330. – Our investigation expands the scope of "modern life-project" to the whole of the oeuvre, focusing on the concept of individuality. This interpretation is close to the conception of Pippin, who treats Hegel as a thinker of "modern life." Cf. Robert B. Pippin, "Naturalität und Geistigkeit in Hegels Kompatibilismus," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 49 (2001): 48–49. – The focus of our interpretation, however, is not the break in the history of humanity, but the life-project of the individuals.

⁹ Let us quote two examples. Siep – although not in an explicit way – adopts many of Hegel's systematic considerations in his book intended to be a foundation of applied ethics. Cf. Ludwig Siep, *Konkrete Ethik: Grundlagen der Natur- und Kulturkritik*. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004). – The other example is a paper by Quante, whose starting point is that Hegel's philosophy is rarely cited in contemporary applied ethics (e.g. bioethics), although it offers inspiring timely considerations for bioethical discussions. Cf. Michael Quante, "Hegel und die biomedizinische Ethik," in *Hegel und die Lebenswissenschaften*, ed. Olaf Breidbach and Dietrich von Engelhardt (Berlin: VWB, 2002), 261–275.

the linear succession of subjective, objective, and absolute shapes of the spirit, we could be led easily to the conclusion that Hegel treated the modern problem of individuality only sporadically and superficially, or even that he underrated it. Such criticism is not only common in the history of interpretation, but continues to appear in contemporary literature, e.g. in the works of Axel Honneth and Manfred Frank.¹⁰

It follows from what we said earlier, that in order to bring to the surface Hegel's conception of modern individuality and the inspiring thoughts hidden in them, we cannot take the usual path. We choose another solution: not to point to a single work or passage, but to proceed *by distinguishing between the dimensions of the Hegelian system, and moving / reading them together*. The reason for this is that the *Hegelian notion of modern individuality can be found and explored in the relations exposed in various concrete passages* (chapters and works) of the systematically-shaped oeuvre. To borrow Paul Tillich's term, relying on the multi-dimensionality (Mehrdimensionalität) of the Hegelian system as an internal methodological principle, offers the best tool to reassess the Hegelian topic of modern individuality.¹¹ This methodological tool is applied in the present book to investigate the topic of individuality in Hegel's *mature works* in the field of *practical philosophy*.¹²

¹⁰ Frank speaks of de-individualization (Entindividualisierung), Honneth of over-institutionalization (Überinstitutionalisierung) in connection with Hegel. See Manfred Frank, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbsterkenntnis* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1991), 458; Axel Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit: Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), 113. – In contrast, Pinkard speaks of the “enlargement” (Vergrößerung) of the subject. See Terry Pinkard, “Innen, Außen und Lebensformen: Hegel und Wittgenstein,” in *Hegels Erbe*, ed. Christoph Halbig, Michael Quante and Ludwig Siep (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 256.

¹¹ Tillich links the geometrical metaphor of dimension with faith and religion. He applies the metaphor related to the multiple stratification of life-processes, to express the unity of being. We use the term here as a methodological tool to explore those extra meanings of Hegel's philosophy that remain hidden in the explicit-linear system. Cf. Paul Tillich, *Die verlorene Dimension: Not und Hoffnung unserer Zeit* (Hamburg: Furche, 1962), 72–91. – See also Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 72–87.

¹² The importance of Hegelian practical philosophy has been recognized by Riedel. See Manfred Riedel, *Rehabilitierung der praktischen Philosophie* (Freiburg: Rombach, 1972–1974). – See also Ludwig Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels: Aufsätze 1997–2009* (München: Fink, 2010), and Elisabeth Weisser-Lohmann, *Rechtsphilosophie als praktische Philosophie: Hegels Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts und die Grundlegung der praktischen Philosophie* (München: Fink, 2011), 12–23, especially on the reinterpretation of practical philosophy in the twentieth century.

At the same time, we should also take note of an initiative that seeks to revive the Hegelian thematization of the modern subject.¹³ In this German-American dialogue concerning Hegel's theory of individuality, the achievements of Ludwig Siep and Robert Pippin are of special interest.¹⁴ This initiative, however, did not originate in the spirit of individual claims of early German romanticism, but was inspired by a more complete and exact evaluation of Hegel,¹⁵ which is also the aim of the present work.

In the course of our exploration, we lay special emphasis on those of Hegel's works which are particularly relevant in themselves for our subject matter, first and foremost the *Philosophy of Right* (1820). The *Philosophy of Right* is now regarded as a key work of modernity, but that has not always been the case.¹⁶ Here, Hegel focuses on the macrostructures of modernity, but within this framework he attends to phenomena that shed light not only on the problems of these macrostructures, but also on the

¹³ *The Modern Subject: Conceptions of the Self in Classical German Philosophy*, ed. Karl Ameriks and Dieter Sturma (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

¹⁴ Cf. Ludwig Siep, "Individuality in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit," in *The Modern Subject: Conceptions of the Self in Classical German Philosophy*, ed. Karl Ameriks and Dieter Sturma, 131–148 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) and Robert B. Pippin, "Hegel's Ethical Rationalism," *ibid.* 149–176. – The works of Düsing and Henrich are essential for the reconstruction of Hegel's discussion of subjectivity. Cf. Klaus Düsing, *Das Problem der Subjektivität in Hegels Logik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1995), and Dieter Henrich, *Bewusstes Leben: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Subjektivität und Metaphysik* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1999). – Our inquiry, however, does not focus on the logical or metaphysical layers of meaning in the concept of subjectivity, but those of practical philosophy.

¹⁵ See Siep's remark on the Herderian and romantic idea of the unmistakability of the individual. Ludwig Siep, "Anerkennung in der Phänomenologie des Geistes und in der praktischen Philosophie der Gegenwart," in *Hegels Aktualität: Über die Wirklichkeit der Vernunft in postmetaphysischer Zeit*, ed. Johann Kreuzer (München: Fink, 2010), 24–25.

¹⁶ The commentary on the *Philosophy of Right* is an important contribution to this. See *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. Ludwig Siep (Berlin: Akademie, 1997). As Siep says: in contrast to the negative interpretation of such liberal thinkers as Popper, liberal philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century like Weil, Ritter, Ilting, or Avineri argued that for Hegel the state has the duty of protecting individuals. – Cobben's interpretation also points out that the *Philosophy of Right* is a basic work of the theory of modernity. Cf. Paul Cobben, *Das Gesetz der multikulturellen Gesellschaft. Eine Aktualisierung von Hegels Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002). – For this very reason it looks problematic to contrast the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* with the *Philosophy of Right* in the American Hegel renaissance, as if the former would represent the modern Hegel, while the latter the conservative Hegel. Unfortunately, some arguments of Brandom, McDowell, or Moyer seem to confirm this view. On the evolutionary connection between practical philosophy and *Phenomenology* see Otto Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 2nd ed. (Freiburg: Alber, 1993), 68–78.

questions of individuality.¹⁷ Such questions include constitutional guarantees of the rule of law, human rights, the right of self-determination, the tendency of modern economy to deepen social divisions, and political and religious extremism, all of which have a direct impact on the lifeworld of individuals.¹⁸

In light of this, our scale of interpretation should extend both to the macrostructures of modernity (institutions, norms, laws, customs), and to the subjective and intersubjective components of the lifeworlds of the individuals (needs, interests, ends, practices, common forms of private life, etc.). The broad, constantly differentiating spectrum of institutions, customs, norms, laws and the complex aspects of individual life constitute the two pillars on which the conceptions of modernity and modern individuality rest.¹⁹ This basic bipolar structure reveals the Hegelian model of complementarity. Nevertheless, the *Philosophy of Right* does not and cannot give a full picture of what we call the Hegelian theory of modernity and modern individuality. Therefore, we are *dependent* on the aforementioned multidimensional methodological approach when we interrogate modern individuality through an exploration of the interrelations of the relevant parts and passages in Hegel's works. In other words, we act in the spirit of Hegel, when we use the system itself to shed light on the contents of our subject matter which had, so far, remained hidden.²⁰

¹⁷ On the twofold basic structure of the macro- and microstructures of modern society see Erzsébet Rózsa, *A modern világ prózája: Hegel-tanulmányok* (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2009), 61–84.

¹⁸ See chapter B.III.

¹⁹ I have borrowed the term “complementarity” from Moyar, but I use it in a different sense. Moyar points to the complementarity of individuals and institutions in Hegel, seeing a basic difference between the conception of the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right*. Behind this, we find two different shapes of subjectivity: the first relies on the experience of consciousness, the second on the concept of abstract will. I modify Moyar's term on one essential point. The *Philosophy of Right* is not only a theory of institutional authority, but also of the authority of the individuals. Complementarity in our work joins in authority these two sources of norms. The basis of our interpretation is the statement that the complementarity of institutions *and* shapes of individuality is a fundamental conceptual consideration in the *Philosophy of Right* as well. Cf. Dean Moyar, “Die Verwicklung meiner Autorität: Hegels komplementäre Modelle von Individuen und Institutionen,” in *Hegels Erbe*, 209–253. – On the question of complementarity of institutions and shapes of individuality see also Rózsa, *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 12–13.

²⁰ Early romantic skepticism about system-building is directed against Kant's latent scientism in the concept of reason. However, the main target of the critique is the system of Hegel, which is quite surprising, regarding that the *Encyclopedia* is not a scientific system, but the “topical cartography” of human knowledge. Cf. Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer, *Philosophie des Selbstbewußtseins: Hegels System als Formanalyse von Wissen und Autonomie*

Specifying the general methodological considerations of multi-dimensionality, our approach is twofold: 1. a conceptual-systematic approach is intended to unfold the levels, shapes, and components of the system of the spirit relevant to the topic of individuality, and to define their *relations* in a *conceptual framework* that seems adequate for the purpose of exploring the conception; 2. a *phenomenological* approach arises in the *field of tension* between the *phenomena* – brought forward by Hegel as examples, but understood as ideal types – and the *conceptuality* adopted based on their description.²¹ In the Hegelian constellation of phenomena and conceptuality, the former are not only occasional examples, highlighting or illustrating his concepts. The phenomenological approach in Hegel is connected to contentual-conceptual considerations, and cannot be viewed as an enumeration of a few examples. On the other hand, it is not simply the descent from pure conceptuality to the level of illustration.²² *Phenomenological approach is the internal dimension of Hegelian conceptuality.* It cannot be separated from the more logically founded conceptuality of the first, systematic approach, though the two are not identical.

The same holds for the conception of individuality: the phenomena involved are internal structural elements of the specific framework of the conception of the individual. The *linguistic* medium of this specific conceptual framework includes such extremely varied expressions as “particular existence” (the first, abstract shape of the lifeworlds of the individuals), “inner life,” the “prose” and “collisions of life” in the modern world, the types of conduct represented by the knight and the educated

(Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2005), 15–17. – We do not follow here this otherwise interesting argument, for our starting point is *ab ovo* different.

²¹ A new suggestion has been made by Barbara Merker to explain the Hegelian connection between phenomena and conceptuality, saying that Hegel's complex entities, which are externally connected and internally articulated in different ways, can be subsumed to appropriate concepts, in spite of homogenous and reductionist causal connections. These methodological considerations give an opportunity to apply Hegel's differentiated categorical repertory to phenomenological descriptions and explanations. Cf. Barbara Merker, “Jenseits des Hirns,” in *Subjektivität und Anerkennung*, ed. Barbara Merker, Georg Mohr, and Michael Quante (Paderborn: Mentis, 2004), 146–147. – On the internal connection of conceptuality and phenomenality see Rózsa, *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 9.

²² Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Geist als Individualität im Blick auf aktuelle Diskussionen,” in *Geist: Erkundungen zu einem Begriff*, ed. Andreas Arndt and Jure Zovko. (Hannover: Wehrhann, 2009), 83–88. – On the broader context of this discussion see Robert Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen: Eine Einführung in den Inferentialismus* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001), 9–24; Vittorio Hösle, “Was kann man von Hegels objektiv-idealistischer Begriffstheorie noch lernen, das über Sellars, McDowells und Brandoms Anknüpfungen hinausgeht?” *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 30 (2005): 295–301.

“honest citizen,” or “subjective religiosity” as the ideal type of the modern individual’s relation to God. This less strongly logical-systematic, non-primary sort of conceptuality is not a consistent part of the *conceptual framework* of the *linear system* (logic, natural philosophy, the philosophy of the spirit, including the subjective, the objective, and the absolute spirit). This secondary conceptuality is only detectable in a roundabout way. In the course of reconstructing the theory of modern individuality, we are *forced to follow roundabout ways to be able to reconstruct the corresponding secondary conceptuality*.

That the phenomenological approach is an internal dimension of Hegelian conceptuality is certified beyond doubt by *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* (1807). Here, Hegel develops a nuanced cultural and socio-historical account of the genesis of the modern individual that is different from the complementary structure-building (based on institutions and forms of subjectivity) and rather rigorous conceptuality of the *Philosophy of Right*.²³ Starting from the chapter on self-consciousness he describes a series of historically differentiating ways of thinking and conduct, which at the same time can be viewed as a set of alternative patterns for the particular lifeworld and conduct of the individual in fully-developed modernity. Pleasure-motivated conduct in contrast to the principle of reality, the life of the virtuous knight, and the attitude of the *bel esprit* are only a few examples to show that Hegel presented here the varied practical dispositions of the emerging modern individual.²⁴ His approach is phenomenological: he treats phenomena as internal structural elements of a conceptuality that is different from that one outlined in the encyclopedic system and the *Philosophy of Right*. These modes of conduct do not disappear from the scene of history, but survive in the historically contextualized culture of the spirit, and the corresponding cultural remembrance. This way, they remain available for individuals in later epochs of modernity as well. The specific phenomenological approach integrated into this

²³ The crucial questions of the concept of individuality occur in the chapter on self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. Cf. Ludwig Siep, *Der Weg der Phänomenologie des Geistes: Ein einführender Kommentar zu Hegels Differenzschrift und Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000), 138–172. Pöggeler highlights the cultural-historical aspect of individuality also in the chapter on self-consciousness. Cf. Otto Pöggeler, “Hegels Phänomenologie des Selbstbewusstseins,” in *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 231–256.

²⁴ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Verhaltensweisen des Individuums der ‘Lust,’ des Individuums des ‘Gesetzes des Herzens’ und des ‘tugendhaften Ritters,’” in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 103–120.

secondary conceptuality is not highly characteristic of the *Philosophy of Right*, and the same holds for the third volume of the *Encyclopedia* treating the spirit. Nonetheless, we find typical patterns of conduct and phenomenological analyses in the later works as well, such as the description of manly behavior in the *Philosophy of Right*, where Hegel tackles the problem of self-identity in the modern individual.²⁵ The context is the modern right of self-determination which makes marriage increasingly unstable.²⁶ This passage reveals how the *primary conception of morality* that dominates the *Philosophy of Right* proves to be *unsatisfactory* in thematizing the conflict between “ethical love” in the modern family – the feeling of adherence, solidarity, responsibility – and the claim for self-assertion that arises from the “right of self-disposal / self-determination.” Yet, both in the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Philosophy of the Spirit* – in contrast to the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* – the *primary conception of the system* has basic priority even in the context of modern individuality. This is also obvious from the conceptual outcome, for on Hegel’s view, the ethical ties of the family seem inevitably stronger than the right of self-determination. The phenomenon of the crisis of the family does not necessarily belong to the *primary conceptuality of the subject matter* (*marriage, family, ethical life, ethical sentiment as love, responsibility, solidarity*). Hegel – although he speaks of crisis phenomena at the very outset of the chapter – eventually approves the dissolution of marriage only as an exception. That is to say, the *conceptuality of the system* prevails, that of marriage, family, and their functions (education, parental care, economy, etc.), which, in turn, serves to demonstrate the normative and practical adhesive force, and predominance of the family ties founded on ethical love.

In characterizing the different aspects of modern individuality, Hegel goes beyond the conceptuality of the objective spirit, and takes recourse in more general systemic concepts and logical formations. The *logical-conceptual structure of the individual, the particular, and the general* are

²⁵ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa: “Subjektivitätsproblematik und Identitätsprobleme in Hegels Rechtsphilosophie: Systematische Überlegungen und das Beispiel des Mannes,” in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 103–120. – See also chapter B.II. 4 of the present work.

²⁶ The strong Hegelian thesis of the modern right to individual self-determination expresses that the private sphere cannot escape the destructive effects of modern freedom. The tensions between individual self-determination and right to particularity, or the ethical significance and functions of family reveal the ambiguities of modern individual existence and lifeworld.

of crucial importance here.²⁷ He applies this logical formation to a variety of topics, including the description of modern individuality. Investigating modern individuality with the tools of a more general, systemic conceptuality, the *Philosophy of Right* does not emphasize the patterns of conduct embedded in the history of culture, which we have seen in the *Phenomenology*, but the linear (and at the same time secondary) systemic concept of “particular existence,” as well as the dynamic conceptual construction of the lifeworld that results from the relations of systemic elements.²⁸ “Particular existence” is a concept introducing the lifeworld of modern individuals in the subjective spirit. It expresses the subjective, optional, contingent elements in the individual existence of the Self, the adherence to nature, and the isolation of this existence.²⁹ In the course of the transition to concrete lifeworlds that takes place in the objective spirit, this sphere of concepts incorporates in itself both the general normative orientations of the ethical world, and the intersubjective relations of the individuals. These *general* normative orientations and intersubjective relations become contents in the specific lifeworld of the individuals, based on the right of self-determination: transforming into *particular, concrete* worlds. The meaning of “particular” becomes twofold: in contrast to the “*subjective particular*” of natural attachment and arbitrary free choice, which is characteristic to the Self as abstract particular existence, the “*objective particular*” of the lifeworld comes into being at the intersection of the elements of ethical life (family, civil society).³⁰ These briefly touched-upon transformations of the logical shape of the individual, particular, and general foreshadow multi-dimensional connections resulting from the relations of logic and spirit. The indicated semantic contents of particularity point to important differences between Hegel and Kant, especially in the problems concerning the *motivation* of the practice of free individuals.³¹ We shall return to this key issue later on.

²⁷ On the contextualization of logical formation in the spirit, and its application in practical philosophy, cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Besonderheit, ‘besondere Existenz’ und das Problem der praktischen Individualität beim Berliner Hegel,” in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 121–181. – See also chapter B of the present work.

²⁸ A detailed discussion can be found in chapter B.I.2.

²⁹ Cf. §§ 481 and 482 in the *Philosophy of Spirit*, which constitute the chapter on free spirit.

³⁰ “Objective particular” as the “right of objectivity” refers to the “universal quality of the action.” Cf. §§ 120, 121, and 139 in the *Philosophy of Right*. On these two levels of the particular, see also the paragraphs on intention and welfare.

³¹ On the difference between Kant and Hegel regarding motivations of actions see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Von der Glückseligkeit zur Freiheit: Systematische Grundlegung des Lebens

The Hegelian concept of individuality can be treated properly only by bringing to the surface both the multiple articulations of it in the system, and the phenomenological-conceptual approach, and revealing their interrelations in order to shed light on the concept. In addition to conceptuality as the adequate form and language of philosophy, we pay attention to such internal elements of the system as *basic principles, ideas, norms*, which Hegel considered essential for a correct description of the normative aspects of modernity, and their the connection with reality and practice.³²

2. THE PRINCIPLE OF "INFINITE SUBJECTIVE FREEDOM" AND ITS AMBIVALENT INFLUENCE ON INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR LEWELWOLDS – THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE BASIC MOTIVE OF THE OEWRE (UNIFICATION)

"*Infinite free subjectivity*" is one of the fundamental themes in the conception of modernity: it is *the supreme principle, idea, and value of the "newer age and world."* This "infinitely important" theme, when viewed in the external structure of the system, appears at the intersection of subjective and objective spirit, and gains further importance in the objective spirit, the central unit of the conception of modernity.³³ It is clearly documented in the *Philosophy of Right*. But this principle is also present in the forms of absolute spirit: the statement about the *end of art*, or the notion of "subjective religiosity," which is one of the modern individual's attitudes to God (preferred by Hegel), are closely related to the same principle,³⁴ since Hegel points out, that the normative principle and the idea of the

als "besondere Existenz" in Hegels Philosophie des Geistes," in *Das Leben denken: Hegel-Jahrbuch 2006, Erster Teil*, ed. Andreas Arndt, Paul Cruysberghs, and Andrzej Przyłębki. (Berlin: Akademie, 2006), 280–286; and Erzsébet Rózsa, "Besonderheit, 'besondere Existenz' und das Problem der praktischen Individualität beim Berliner Hegel," in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 125–130. – On motivations see also chapter B.2 of the present work.

³² On the relation between principles, ideas, and their historical and actual aspects see S § 482 and R Preface.

³³ Cf. R § 124.

³⁴ For Hegel, "subjective religiosity" is the idealtypical – although not universal – form of religiosity in modernity. See Erzsébet Rózsa, "Glauben als Wissen," in *Hegel-Jahrbuch, 2002, Erster Teil*, ed. Andreas Arndt, Karol Bal, and Henning Ottman (Berlin: Akademie, 2003), 223–228; and Erzsébet Rózsa, "'Glaube im Gefühl': Hegels Auffassung der subjektiven Religiosität in Bezug auf die Selbstdeutung und die Selbstbestimmung des modernen Individuums," in *Viele Religionen, eine Vernunft? Ein Disput zu Hegel*, ed. Wolfgang Kaltenbacher, Herta Nagl-Docekal, and Ludwig Nagl (Wien: Böhlau, 2008), 135–154. – For a modified version of the basic idea of the latter, see chapter C.1 in this work.

modern individual's freedom *leads to problematic consequences in actual life conduct*. In various parts of the oeuvre, he has already confronted the fact that while subjective freedom is a basic principle and value of modernity, it could, and sometimes does, have a devastating effect on the life of the individual and on the functioning of the modern world as well. Contemporary drama provides Hegel with many examples on the destructive effect of the subjective principle of freedom on the lives of the individuals. It is no accident, that he tackles the problem of modern drama not only in the philosophy of art, but also in his social philosophy.³⁵ The "vacillating attitude" (*schwankende Haltung*), formed by arbitrariness and contingency which shows how subjective freedom can break loose, is one of the great topics in the Hegelian conception of modernity, and consequently, of the dramatic portrayal of modern life.³⁶

The topic of "vacillating attitude" leads back to the basic motive common in the young Hegel and Hölderlin: the idea that life needs to be unified, since a torn, divided, or unbalanced condition is impossible to live in.³⁷ This existential situation gives rise to the *need for philosophy* (and *religion*), which expresses the *profound desire* of the human being as individual to be *consistent and unified* with oneself.³⁸ This is no longer granted to modern individuals, but something that could and should be achieved in roundabout ways. The ideas of "rational insight" and rational attitude to reality in the *Preface* to the *Philosophy of Right*, which is not devoted to systemic conceptual analysis, express the same motive: the need to

³⁵ Hegel raises the issue of modern drama in the *Philosophy of Right*, in the chapter on morality, in § 118, where he examines actions in relation to the right of knowledge. The manuscript notes of Hegel discuss the topic in detail. Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 219–222. – For the critique of modern dramatic exposure see § 126 also in the chapter on morality.

³⁶ On the internal connection between unstable posture and the basic motive of Hegelian practical philosophy – the need for unification – see Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 13–30.

³⁷ The broad historical background of the motive of unification is highlighted by Charles Taylor, who understands unification as the basic intention of German culture. Cf. Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). – Henrich treats unification as the common motive of Hölderlin and Hegel. See Dieter Henrich, "Hegel und Hölderlin," in *Stuttgarter Hegel-Tage 1970*, *Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 11 (1983): 51. – Jamme follows Henrich in discussing the motive of unification in Hegel and Hölderlin. Schiller's influence on Hegel is also important in this respect as well. Cf. Christoph Jamme, "Ein ungelehrtes Buch: Die philosophische Gemeinschaft zwischen Hölderlin und Hegel in Frankfurt 1797–1800," *Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 23 (1983): 110–112.

³⁸ See the *Differenzschrift* (D).

consolidate the lives of individual human beings.³⁹ The young Hegel refers to this existential need and its satisfaction with the term *unification* (Vereinigung), while in 1820, he uses the word *reconciliation* (Versöhnung). The earlier unification and the later reconciliation are both motives of the integrity and identity of the modern individual, offering unstable modern individuals a way to reach their desired stability.

Not only did the terms change, so did their meaning. In the young Hegel, unification and stabilization can be achieved by love, which has *romantic* and *existential contents*.⁴⁰ On the contrary, in the mature Hegel, consolidation as reconciliation is approached with realist, pragmatic attitudes and practices, embedded in the normativity of modern ethics (legal, political and private norms, institutions and customs).⁴¹ That is to say, the mature Hegel gives a *prosaic* meaning to the existential need of unification, expressing the power and “*triviality*” of the spheres of modern life, as well as the “*mediocrity*” of modern individuals. At the same time, the practical sphere does have a general orientation point, even in modernity. This point is marked by reason, as general human *normativity*. Practices are embedded in the socio-cultural normativity of modern ethics, attached to legal, political and private norms, institutions, and customs.

This way, the need to consolidate individuals and their lifeworlds is a motive present in the whole of Hegel's philosophy. That is why I call it a *basic motive*, tightly connected to the profound Hegelian analysis of modern existence. However, this basic motive is mostly hidden in different passages of the oeuvre, and it takes serious exploratory efforts to bring its layers of meaning and their relations to the surface. The *terms* corresponding to the basic motive (*vacillating attitude, the need for unification, reconciliation*) do not hold the same strong logical position as do individual, particular, general. They are not systemic concepts in the strong sense of the word. We might as well call them *metaphors*, allowing Hegel to grasp the problems of the modern individual's conduct in typical phenomena.⁴²

³⁹ On rational insight and rational relation to actuality see the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*.

⁴⁰ Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegel szeretetfilozófiája,” *Pro Philosophia Füzetek* 31 (2002): 1–20.

⁴¹ For an analysis of this meaning of reconciliation see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegels Auffassung der Versöhnung und die Metaphorik der ‘Vorrede’ der Rechtsphilosophie. Risse am System?” *Hegel-Studien*, 32 (1997): 137–160; and Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 38–41.

⁴² On the question of reconciliation as a metaphor, see Rózsa, *Hegels Auffassung der Versöhnung und die Metaphorik der ‘Vorrede’ der Rechtsphilosophie. Risse am System?* – On reconciliation as a model for conduct see Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 25–28.

Nevertheless, reconciliation has another meaning in the late system: it is a system-organizing principle, and therefore a concept as well.⁴³

Hegel investigates the *adequate forms of conduct* of modern individuality, where adequate should be understood in the socio-cultural and semantic space of self-interpretation, self-determination (self-assertion) and self-presentation/communication. In the field of modern identity, the “*expressivist turn*” (Taylor) draws our attention not only to internal (and internalized) motives, but also to *natural* elements that have a role in forming identity. In the history of ideas, many ideas of Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Hölderlin, Schelling, and Hegel belong here.⁴⁴ We might add, that the “*expressivist turn*” can be tracked in Hegel in another way: in the *Phenomenology* he presents a variety of modes of thinking and conduct, that all refer to both nature and the elements of the inner world as forces behind. These modes of conduct are at the same time presented as a series of *models* of conduct for modern individuals. The mature Hegel, however, sets clear limits: modernity, based on “infinite subjective freedom,” *excludes the mere imitation* of such ages and forms of conduct, that are principally alien to modernity, like the imitation of ancient heroes (Achilles) or great personalities, e.g. Antigone and Creon. This is not only impossible, but undesirable as well. (For this very reason, Hegel cannot be called a classicist.) His views are even more complex: in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, in describing the modes of conduct of the modern individual historically and phenomenologically, he also presents the

⁴³ On reconciliation as a systematic-structural principle see Rózsa, “Versöhnung und Vereinigung: Leitfaden im Leben versus Systemprinzip.” in *Versöhnung und System*, 41–51.

⁴⁴ According to Taylor, romanticism conquered culture as the “sensibility” of Europe. Truth is found in inwardness, in our emotions. Nature has become important for this sensibility as a shaping form of identity. This expressive turn has also affected the concept of individuality: every individual is different, something original, everyone has one's own walk of life, in close connection with self-knowledge and self-determination. This change has brought about the narratively representable forms of human life, which reveals the expressiveness of nature. Taylor ranks Hegel among the romantics, especially the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. Cf. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 368–390. – Taylor's expressivism is further specified by Brandom as “constitutive, pragmatic, relational-linguistic expressivism,” focused on making explicit the implicit structures and contents of cognition connected to activities, and linguistic performance. Hegel's influence is palpable in the claim to totality, and in the spiritual and linguistic horizon of inquiry. See Robert Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen: Eine Einführung in den Inferentialismus* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001), 16.–20. – Brandom's discussion of the expressive nature of reason has partly been inspired by Hegel's idea of “social practices,” which is an indispensable stage in the qualification of discursive practice and the transition from pragmatics to semantics. See Robert Brandom, *Expressive Vernunft* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000), 16.

specific signs of the “newer age,” as well as the traces of continuity between historically and culturally embedded models of conduct.⁴⁵ Such phenomena as the conduct of the “knight of virtue,” are hints of an old Europe, whose world has gone, but never been completely destroyed. Therefore, *past and present, hidden and apparent, mysterious and self-revealing can meet in the modes of conduct of our own age as well*, provided that there are individuals, who, immersing themselves in cultural remembrance, revive in their own lives the interplay of past and present. The principle of “infinite free subjectivity” and the “infinite right” of the modern individual to determine, choose, and shape one’s own life gives plenty of opportunities to do so.

One basic feature of modernity is that *there are no more heroes and great personalities*, as the basic values and norms of that world are gone once and for all. (Napoleon is an exception, although his greatness is to be seen not from the viewpoint of “modern age,” but rather from the perspective of world history.) The actual main character of modern society, and the subject of modern life conduct is the *citizen*, with his norm of honesty.⁴⁶ A human being, however, is not born to be a citizen, but becomes one. More than just custom and family play a role in this process.⁴⁷ In addition to family upbringing, education and training play an eminent role in individuals’ socialization in the circumstances of the modern world.⁴⁸ Their primary role is to serve the training and education of honest citizens, in the spirit of “*Bildung zur Freiheit*.” Education is a socio-cultural form that makes possible to *communicate, attain, and follow the models of conduct of other cultures and past ages*. Although not precisely in their original shape, but as educational material, through the medium of this socialization form, they can contribute to the self-interpretation, self-determination,

⁴⁵ *Phenomenology* is a storehouse of ways of conduct. Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Verhaltensweisen des Individuums der ‘Lust,’ des Individuums des ‘Gesetzes des Herzens’ und des ‘tugendhaften Ritters’: Zu Hegels Auffassung der Individualität im Vernunft-Kapitel der Phänomenologie des Geistes.” in *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes heute*, ed. Andreas Arndt and Ernst Müller (Berlin: Akademie, 2004), 121–144.

⁴⁶ “Honest citizen” is the socio-culturally trained and self-training protagonist of modernity. Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “‘Bildung’ und der ‘rechtschaffene Bürger’: Zu Hegels Bildungstheorie im Rahmen seiner Konzeption der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in der Philosophie des Rechts,” in *Kultur – Kunst – Öffentlichkeit: Philosophische Perspektive auf praktische Probleme. Festschrift für Otto Pöggeler zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert and Elisabeth Weisser-Lohmann. (München: Fink, 2001), 81–94.

⁴⁷ Hegel links education as a form of socialization to the family. Cf. R § 174.

⁴⁸ Civil society is the home of training and education (*Bildung*) as a form of socialization. Cf. R §§ 197, 200, and 201.

and self-chosen identity of modern individuals. This sort of “imitation,” however, can never replace the original that has been lost; the educated citizen, no matter how honest he is, can never become a hero like Achilles, or a great personality like Creon (Antigone could belong here as well, if Hegel did not reduce her to the prosaic level of the “model sister” of his time, a move which would influence Kierkegaard later on.)⁴⁹

Education only renders it possible to take as models some forms of life of past ages, not to imitate the greatness of Achilles or Antigone. The “pure ethics” and the great individuals of the ancient Greek world cannot be restored.⁵⁰ It is not needed, anyway. In contrast, the model of the knight that belongs to the worldly beginnings of romantic (modern) art, can appear in the life conduct of modern individuals, e.g. when the young one only concentrates on one’s own inner life, rebelling against the world. But the “full-fledged” individual – tamed down to become an honest citizen – gets rid of this model, and leaves it behind.

3. THE HONEST CITIZEN: THE PROTAGONIST OF MODERNITY AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, THE IDEAL OF THE EDUCATED CITIZEN, AND ECONOMIC SELF-DETERMINATION

The two works which outline the coordinates for reconstructing Hegel’s theory of modern individuality are the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. The basic work of the theory of educated citizenship (Bildungsbürgertum) is not solely the *Phenomenology*, but also the *Philosophy of Right*. The relation of these two works relevant to our topic consists in the fact that to the philosophy of self-consciousness set forth in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel attached the theory of the educated citizen, and this way he created a *uniquely broad and complex cultural-theoretical foundation*.⁵¹ Based on these constituents of the history of ideas, he elaborated his own, powerful conception of the modern individual, a conception rooted in German idealism, and which differs from German idealism

⁴⁹ See chapter C.II. of the present work.

⁵⁰ The unique greatness of Antigone is always disturbed by modern, prosaic, and degrading elements in Hegel. See Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegels Antigone-Deutung – Zum Status der praktischen Individualität in der Phänomenologie des Geistes,” in *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes. Ein kooperativer Kommentar zu einem Schlüsselwerk der Moderne*, ed. Klaus Vieweg and Wolfgang Welsch. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2008), 455–473. – See also chapter C.II.

⁵¹ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Bildung, Reichtum und das Problem des Selbst: Zur Theorie des modernen Individuums in der Phänomenologie des Geistes,” in *Hegel-Jahrbuch 2001*, ed. Andreas Arndt, Karol Bal, and Henning Ottman (Berlin: Akademie, 2002), 204–211.

in many respects. One major contribution to the conception is due to the *reception of British economics*, which is a specific Hegelian achievement in German philosophy.⁵² By means of the self-determination taking place in the economic process, which he explicates in the civil society chapter of the *Philosophy of Right*, as its “first principle,” in the shape of the “concrete person” motivated by particular needs, he introduces a new aspect to the conception of modern individuality.⁵³ The egocentric, concrete person, seeking to satisfy one’s own needs, constitutes the first form of economic self-determination, in parallel with the work principle of Adam Smith. The junctions of these three constituents of the history of ideas (the ideal of education and the educated citizen, the philosophy of self-consciousness, and the reception of British economics) give rise to the ideal-typical characters of modernity.

Hegel – relying on a complex philosophical and socio-cultural basis – presents the economically and socio-culturally determined, active, ambitious, educated, honorable *honest citizen* as the *protagonist* of modernity. This seemingly powerful and massive character, the *honest citizen*, is in reality not so grand: he never gets rid completely of the basic motive that generated him, the “vacillating attitude” of the modern individual, constantly pursuing his own identity and stability. His life conduct and personality is always affected by this disposition and the struggle against it.

The *Philosophy of Right* offers one conceptual basis and primary text for understanding the honest citizen as the protagonist of modernity. Here, Hegel connects the various shapes and determinations of the modern individual to those functions of education as culture, the practice of which can have a profound impact on the life-form of modern individuals.⁵⁴

The “nesting” of *education* in the individuals’ intellectual and emotional world, practices, and lifeworlds constitutes a firm basis for the “*concrete person*,” the first subject of the civil society, motivated by needs, who steps forward in the economic world. Education, “educated consciousness,” makes one able to form and transform one’s immediate incentives

⁵² Cf. Manfred Riedel, “Die Rezeption der Nationalökonomie,” in *Studien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), 75–99. – Erzsébet Rózsa, *Hegel gazdaságfilozófiája* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1993).

⁵³ The first principle of modern civil society is the “concrete person” motivated by one’s own particular needs. See Erzsébet Rózsa, “Das Prinzip der Besonderheit in Hegels Wirtschaftsphilosophie,” in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 182–213.

⁵⁴ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Bildung, Identität, Integrität. Hegels soziokulturelles Modell der Individualität im Blick auf seine Konzeption der modernen bürgerlichen Gesellschaft,” in *Bildungsphilosophie: Grundlagen, Methoden, Perspektiven*, ed. Rudolf Rehn and Christina Schües (Freiburg: Alber, 2008), 86–112.

(instincts, desires, and happiness in general – the elements treated in the subjective spirit), needs (as components of the objective spirit), practices (acts and deeds), as well as one's particular existence concretized and contextualized as one's own lifeworld. This way the egocentric, "concrete person," who only seeks to fulfill their own needs, steps out of the narrow-minded, particular existence of the private person, and starts becoming a substantial person. This transformation takes place during the practice of "*training and education for freedom*" (*Bildung zur Freiheit*), which is, at the same time, the vindication of the functions essential for the modern mode of existence. The *recognition of mutual dependence* with others, the insight into the institutional frameworks, and the acceptance thereof is inevitable for the fulfillment of needs, too. This insight and recognition is no private matter, neither is it a mental act belonging to the inner world of the self, rather it is an actual contentual determination, arising from the reflection on the intersubjective and institutional framework of the individual's lifeworld, i.e. the world of ethical life. The motivational system of needs also fits into this world, as it should.

Thus the mental and practical-behavioral patterns of modern life present themselves at the intersections of *normative and practical-real dimensions*. The supreme normative content of the training for freedom is signaled by the claim and direction of rising to the "higher in human" (*das Höhere im Menschen*). This norm represents the most general orientation in individuals' self-interpretation and self-determination, as well as in their intersubjective acts and relations with institutions (customs, norms, laws) and other human beings (individuals and communities). In the process of training, the "concrete person" transforms herself or himself from the first subject of civil society into *citizen, then honest citizen*, incorporating in one's lifeworld (and inner life, as a part of the former) ready-made norms and customs as well as one's own experience, and above all the various determinations that result from the right of self-determination. It is in this manifold relation that the honest citizen becomes a subject responding to modern society's requirements. His or her life conduct is marked by two dimensions: *the normative dimension of training for freedom, and the practical dimension that is linked to the fulfillment of needs*.

The character of the honest citizen is not only to be found in the *Philosophy of Right*, but also in the *Phenomenology*, the *Philosophy of the Spirit*, etc. The number of relevant passages is considerably high: in addition to parts of the aforementioned works, the text corpus of our topic includes Hegel's writings on social philosophy and the philosophy of history, lectures on the philosophy of art and religion, and the lectures on the history

of philosophy. This sort of text construction may be explained by the fact that Hegel wished to present the characteristic features of the central figure of modern individuality in the most complete setting, in every sphere of life, and in a variety of typical situations.

4. THE LEVELS OF SYSTEMIC CONCEPTUALITY OF THE QUESTION OF INDIVIDUALITY: 1. THE "PARTICULAR EXISTENCE" OF THE SELF, AND THE PRACTICAL MOTIVATIONS IN THE SUBJECTIVE SPIRIT; 2. THE CONCRETE-PARTICULAR LEFELVORL – IN THE OBJECTIVE SPIRIT

Compared to the *Philosophy of Right* (and the *Phenomenology*) the third volume of the *Encyclopedia* offers another, and partly different, starting point for the understanding of the modern individual. In this work, the concept of *particularity* serves to describe the individually, socio-culturally, and historically contextualized, complex human existence as it is embedded in the Hegelian theory of the concept.⁵⁵ Firstly, particularity in its connection to generality and individuality is a formation of the Hegelian *Logic*. The status of the logical formation, however, changes within the different spheres of spirit. The explanation for this lies primarily in the basic principle of modernity: the infinitely free subjectivity, the explication of which can be found in different passages of practical philosophy in the domain of the spirit. In this respect, the way of life and lifeworld of the modern individual is one of the focal points of Hegel's thorough examinations both in the *Philosophy of the Spirit* and the *Philosophy of Right*.⁵⁶

Hegel introduces the concept of particularity with regard to the determinations and self-determination of the Self in the chapter on *subjective spirit* in the *Encyclopedia*, where he uses the term "*particular existence*."⁵⁷ In other words, this takes place in the introductory parts of the practical philosophy, which in turn alters the logical meaning: here begins the *contextualization of the logical formation*. Hegel asks the question: how can the single individual, whose practices are immediately incited by

⁵⁵ See Hösle's thought-provoking essay: Vittorio Hösle, "Was kann man von Hegels objektiv-idealistischer Theorie des Begriffs noch lernen, das über Sellars, McDowells und Brandons Anknüpfungen hinausgeht?" *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 30, (2005): 139.

⁵⁶ On the eminence of particularity in the theory of individuality in practical philosophy see Erzsébet Rózsa, "Besonderheit, 'besondere Existenz' und das Problem der praktischen Individualität beim Berliner Hegel," in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 121–181. – See also chapter B.

⁵⁷ Cf. S § 482.

the pursuit of happiness, which lends one's life a natural and subjective-arbitrary character, overcome the arbitrariness of these motivations, and lay one's life on solid grounds? Hegel finds the solution in the world of the *objective spirit*, explicated in detail by the *Philosophy of Right*. The Preface points out that the contingency and subjective-arbitrary character of the individual life can be overcome by "rational insight" and "rational attitude to actuality."⁵⁸ At the first level, this insight and attitude can rely on the simple reaction of the natural consciousness and ingenious emotion ("einfaches Verhalten des unbefangenen Gemüts"), which is the immediate starting point of every individual's life and consciousness.⁵⁹ On a second level, *education* offers the possibility of progress, by which the individual can train himself or herself to become a citizen and an honest citizen in a profession, as well as in private life and lifeworld. However, due to the linear structure of the system, this last step has not yet been taken.

Thus, the first important locus of the concept of particularity is in the subjective spirit, where the motivations for practices are treated in detail by Hegel, *elaborating an alternative to Kant*. Namely, he connects freedom to immediate, particular motivations, ranging from instincts to happiness. The conceptual constellation replacing the opposition between happiness-motivations and freedom-motivations reflects a change of conception, which can be explained from the basic motives of the oeuvre. The coupling of the double motivational structure (happiness and freedom) provides a new path of consolidation for the practices and attitudes of the individuals, without having to eliminate in any way the first, immediate motivations that result from our physical-natural existence, and are given as such. The second motivation – freedom – transcends the mere contingency and subjectivity of happiness, and without setting it aside. In this double motivational structure, the spiritual, therefore higher, normative motivation of freedom can preserve the particularity of the individuals' motivations, practices and lifeworlds, without surrendering it to arbitrariness and contingency, and without eliminating the latter from the lifeworld and practices.⁶⁰

The transformation of the instincts through happiness to freedom takes place in the generally given human medium of *reason*, which is instinc-

⁵⁸ R, 22 (Preface).

⁵⁹ R, 11 (Preface).

⁶⁰ On the two basic motivations of action, see Erzsébet Rózsa, "Von der Glückseligkeit zur Freiheit. Systematische Grundlegung des Lebens als 'besondere Existenz' in Hegels Philosophie des Geistes," in *Das Leben denken: Hegel-Jahrbuch 2006, Erster Teil*, 280–286.

tively given first in “simple life.”⁶¹ This is the *sphere and the movement of practical reason*. “Rational insight” and “rational attitude to actuality,” in the transition from instinctive to reflective reason, denote epistemic and practical forms which are available to every individual. The latter, reflective rational formation makes it possible to *consciously* incorporate general ethical contents as norms into subjective motivations and activities. This moment, on the other hand, contributes to stabilizing life conduct, once it is started and thought of as subjective, contingent, and to strengthen the “objective particular” aspect. The inclusion of the “objective particular” in the initially abstract “particular existence” of the individual is made possible by the fact that – being indeterminate – this existence is *open*. Its natural immediacy and subjectivity makes it open to the concrete-particular lifeworld which is contextualized in objective spirit, and socio-culturally mediated, organized, and interpreted by the “educated consciousness” of individuals.

Thus, *reason* and *education* together mark those boundaries, within which the *general* relation of nature and spirit (culture) can be *factually* highlighted from the viewpoint of the *particularity* of individuals and their lifeworlds.⁶² *Practical rationality* gains full meaning in *particular* motivations and practices engaging both immediate, natural aspects of one’s life and concrete-particular lifeworlds, and cultivated by the forms of educated consciousness.⁶³ This multiple transformation takes place in the

⁶¹ Robert Pippin lays emphasis on the eminent role of freedom in Hegel’s practical philosophy, which he joins to the Hegelian concept of reason. The link between rational conduct and freedom, an important element in Pippin’s interpretation, is a cornerstone of my work. Cf. Robert Pippin, *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). – The expressiveness of Hegelian reason, i.e. the extension of the competence of reason to inner nature and inner world, initiated by Taylor and followed by Brandom, connects Hegel to romanticism. Without assuming the connection to be too close, the idea is worthy of consideration. See, for example, the discussion of instincts and happiness in the context of activities aimed at freedom.

⁶² The Hegelian – or to use Brandom’s term, pragmatic – interpretation of the relation between nature and culture can be an important aspect of a timely discussion of Hegel, albeit it is insufficient in itself for a (re)construction of the “authentic” Hegel. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Zur Einführung,” *Stuttgarter Hegel-Tage 1970. Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 11 (1983): xii. – As Brandom points out, Hegel’s expressivism is not only “pragmatic” but “rationalist” as well. Cf. Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen*, 50–54.

⁶³ In Horstmann’s view, reason is a primary structure for Hegel, from which everything that can properly be called actual differentiates. Reason has an epistemological and ontological connotation. Horstmann thus links Hegel’s notion of reason to the old metaphysics, and does not take note of the special status of practical reason, the reason that – as a foundation – makes accessible the meanings of Taylor’s expressive reason and Brandom’s pragmatic reason. This could be the result of the elimination of the Hegelian conception

movement from subjective spirit to objective spirit, and in the movement within objective spirit: the *abstract “particular existence”* of the isolated Self turns into the proper *concrete-particular lifeworld* of the concrete person and citizen. This twofold socio-cultural (education) and “*anthropological*” (reason) contextualization makes describable those basic features of the modern individual’s lifeworld (self-determining, subjective and institutionalized, objective at the same time) which find their adequate expression exactly in the *constellations of these concepts*. Thus, in consequence of these further contentual determinations, the “particular existence” of the Self, which was introduced in the subjective spirit, and supported by logical concepts (individual, particular, general), corresponds to the conceptual shape of the modern individual’s lifeworld.

As we have seen, Hegel assigned to motivations a major role in describing the existence of the Self. On the first level, motivations of actions belong to the field of the subjective spirit, the world of the Self, while the execution and effects of the actions link them to the sphere of the objective spirit. From this perspective, the viewpoint of realization, motivations are connected with the lifeworld, which Hegel treated in the *Philosophy of Right*, in the *objective spirit*, in accordance with the linear structure. Lifeworld does not consist only of the “inner world” constituted by feelings and emotions, that belong to the subjective spirit. Lifeworld is a “reality-shape,” that has a *relational* nature. Lifeworld is constituted by the relations of the institutional framework and forms of *private life* (marriage, family) in relation (“im Verhältnis”) to substantial life,⁶⁴ as well as in the *combination* of institutionalized forms of civil society (profession, corporation).

This composition of the lifeworld results from the *further articulation of the still abstract, subjective particular existence* within the scope of ethical life. However, lifeworld is not connected to ethics solely within the objective spirit. *Morality*, which precedes ethical life, has an *eminent role* in highlighting the nature of particular existence that relates to the subjective spirit and integrates motivations, and in interpreting the lifeworld that lays emphasis on the realization of those motivations and thus becomes factual. Problems like the becoming particular of the Self (*Besonderung des Ich*) before the background of determination by the *will*, or the nor-

of modernity. Cf. Dina Emundts and Rolf-Peter Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel: Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 32–37.

⁶⁴ On the Hegelian distinction between private life and substantial life, private person and substantial person, see R § 187.

mative and practical dimensions of *self-determination*, are treated by Hegel with reference to morality. The *multiple relational structure* of the lifeworld of modern individuality is constituted exactly this way, in the relations of *spirit and logic, subjective and objective spirit, morality and ethical life*. Enlarging circles provide us with the result of our (re)construction: Hegel's modern concept of individuality. This enlargement is also contentual: subjective freedom, the core of which is treated systematically by Hegel in morality, extends to the territory of the objective order (*objektive Ordnung*) of institutions, laws, legal and ethical-normative arrangements.⁶⁵ These arrangements serve as the frames and guarantees of the subjective freedom of individuals (too), affecting their lifeworlds immediately. *The freedom of the modern individual* is not merely *subjective*, but also *intersubjective* and *institutionally* established and shaped – therefore *objective* as well. Through its normativity, even a prosaic virtue, like that of honesty, is also *substantial*. The constellation of these three determinations (subjective, objective, substantial) as the basic structure of modern freedom, expresses the *institutional, normative and practical limitations* of subjective freedom, but in return, offers a *stabilizing effect* for the individuals in their theoretical and practical conduct. This is exactly the function of laws, institutions and ethical norms with regard to the lifeworlds of the individuals, and not the enhancement of the excessive power of institutions.

According to Hegel, the eminent place of individuality in modernity is secured only if the individuals think and act *rationally*: consciously articulating their lifeworlds in the network of the institutions of ethical life, and recognizing the authority of the latter.⁶⁶ The recognition of this authority does not simply their subjective freedom, because that is how individuals acquire “rights” – as forms and guarantees of their freedom.⁶⁷ Thus, they find – or seem to find – the firm basis (“feste Grundlage,” “feste Stellung im Leben”) of their lives and actions in the spheres organized by institutional guarantees (law, ethics, economy, politics). In reverse, the individuals enrich the general-normative ethical world with

⁶⁵ On the Hegelian extension of the principle of freedom, see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegels Liberalismus im Licht einiger systematischen Aufsätze und Kategorien bzw. idealtypischen Phänomene in der Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts,” in *Hegel-Jahrbuch 2008, Hegels politische Philosophie, Erster Teil*, ed. Andreas Arndt, Paul Cruysberghs, and Andrzej Przyłębski (Berlin: Akademie, 2008), 87–96.

⁶⁶ R § 145–147.

⁶⁷ Hegel discusses the system of these rights in the chapter on morality and on the administration of justice.

their particular lifeworlds and practices, without which the ethical world would be a deceased, merely positive establishment.⁶⁸

The integration of subjective freedom as the center of morality and the lifeworlds of particular individuals into the objective order of the institutions, the ethical world, does not and cannot mean giving up the individuals' subjective freedom and self-determination. It is rather a consolidation of their lifeworlds, the price of which is the *conscious self-limitation* of autonomy. Hegel's view consists primarily in the claim that the *collisions of modern society* should be not be handled through *institutions alone, but also through habitual and practical attitudes* (rational insight and rational attitude to actuality). These collisions need to be controlled by the autonomous, free individuals themselves. In addition to the principle of subjective freedom, the institutions of the modern family, civil society, and the state have to contain as structural elements the self-limiting habitual and practical attitudes based on the norm of rationality.

5. THE GOOD LIFE VS. RATIONAL LIFE CONDUCT – IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE “RIGHT OF OBJECTIVITY” AS THE NORMATIVITY OF MODERNITY

The idea of modern freedom raises the question: what happens to the classic ideal/norm of the good life, its “substantiality,” in the actual life conduct of modern, self-determining individuals? What is the relation between subjective freedom and the substantiality-bearing “good life” in the modern era? Is it possible to maintain the traditional norm of “good life” in a life conduct based on the principle of subjective freedom and self-determination? Let us recall what constitutes subjective freedom in Hegel. Above all, it is a basic principle connected to the history of modernity, and a general, orientating norm that takes clearer shape in the empirically universal right of self-determination. Individuals want to express this right in actuality, realizing it in their practices and life conduct. Individuals attach to the right of self-determination a claim to realization.

This leads to the “*right to particularity*,” which refers to the closer determination of the *general* principle of subjective freedom and the right of self-determination of every *single* individual, taking into account the claim for realization.⁶⁹ The role of the right to particularity is to legitimize the

⁶⁸ Cf. R § 260.

⁶⁹ On the right to particularity see R §§ 121 and 124.

claim for realization present in the general principle of freedom and the individuals' right to self-determination, from the viewpoint of the "actual human being" as a particular individual and his or her particular lifeworld.⁷⁰ The claim for realization is attached to the *immediate* perspective of the "actual human being" and his or her lifeworld, and cannot be deduced from principles or ideas. "But *the law does not act*, only an actual human being acts." – argues Hegel against Kant.⁷¹ At the same time, Hegel shares the intentions of modern institutions to articulate and codify the abstract normativity of subjective freedom in the form of various rights and liberties. This aims at handling (a part of) the concrete collisions and conflicts arising in the lives of actual individuals by means of the legal system and jurisdiction. Thus, the principle of subjective freedom transforms into a system of rights and mechanisms of the administration of justice, which are available in the modern age for *every single human being in one's own particularity*. This *availability* is a condition of the fulfillment of any claim to realization. The legal system and the administration of justice mark the *institutional* boundaries of the legitimation and realization of the various activities, their counterpart and supplement being the *individuals' legal consciousness and legal culture*, which are the manifestations of their self-consciousness and right of self-determination.⁷²

The claim for realization calls attention to the *contentual questions* of the rights and liberties, the administration of justice and self-determination. In Hegel's view, the principle of subjective freedom, the system of liberties, the mechanisms of the administration of justice, all of these together do not amount to the totality of modern freedom. In his critique of the formalism of Kant and Fichte, he emphasizes the fact that content belongs internally to modern freedom, as *every single* human being's own freedom. Freedom, as a structural element of the *spheres of reality* (lifeworlds, inner worlds) is in connection with the peculiar, concrete quality and particular character of each human being's life.

What does content mean in this respect? Hegel's reply is that a human being does not *want* a principle, an idea, or an abstract right. Will and the act of willing as a practical relation does not mean that the person wants normativity, the idea as such, but wants *something actual and particular*.

⁷⁰ Although in the linear system, "actual human being" belongs to the so-called secondary conceptuality, it has a central conceptual role, which Hegel himself emphasizes when comparing his own point of view to that of Kant. Cf. R § 135.

⁷¹ R § 140.

⁷² See chapter B.III.2.3.

This very contentual determination is the essence of practical life with respect to subjective freedom as right, principle, and form. Determination as differentiation and separation provides the *concrete contentual* feature that presents the content-form dualism not as an abstract logical shape, but in the specific medium of the spirit – and in this case, freedom, which is its essence – in the sphere of practical life, summarized in the concept of will; by the concrete *particularity* specified here.⁷³ Thus, the introduction of particularity into the topics of freedom takes place as a *combination of logical-conceptual and spiritual-conceptual meanings*. The extra meaning of this constellation is further elucidated by the “right of conscience,” which denotes the general normativity of modernity’s legal consciousness and culture, its empirically universal character, and its actual realization. The “right of conscience” as the right of knowledge and the right of self-determination belongs to individuals, which also appears in their legal culture. The legal consciousness and culture of individuals becomes an immediate structural element of the administration of justice, and also an index of the individuals’ lifeworlds and quality of life.

The precedence of particularity does not in itself eliminate the connection of life with the general, or substantial, even if the radical turn in the history of modern freedom has a far-reaching effect on the ideal of the good life. The *substantial* norm of the tendency towards the ethical good is now *supplemented* by the idea of “infinite subjective freedom,” resulting in a *double normativity*. To use Hegel’s formula, “*subjective substantiality*” gives expression to the basic duality of modern individual life and freedom, which articulates the ambivalent nature of modern freedom. Modern freedom, in the first place, is a “subjective value,” which opens the way to questioning the substantial power and content of ethical norms. While Hegel applauds the questioning of traditional authorities, he also has reservations regarding the questioning of substantiality in general.⁷⁴ He is especially sensitive to the extremes resulting from subjective freedom, of which he speaks in § 140 of the *Philosophy of Right*. The subject of modernity tends to absolutize himself or herself, and consequently, substantiality – and the ideal of the good life – becomes questionable by anyone and everyone.⁷⁵

⁷³ Cf. the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right*, especially §§ 121–127.

⁷⁴ The “right of knowledge” in opposition to the principle of authority is everyone’s due in the sphere of modern law. Cf. R § 213.

⁷⁵ Cf. R § 140.

Hegel, however, does not wish to sharpen the conflict between the two sorts of normativity (substantial and subjective substantial): he seeks *balance* and *mediation*. That is what the formula of “subjective substantiality” refers to in the first place.⁷⁶ The question arises: can his intentions be understood as “entrenching” the Aristotelian norm of the good life into particular individuals’ lives, which are based on the modern right of self-determination? Are autonomous, free individuals ready to recognize and endorse the traditional norm of the good life? Hegel has a specific solution to the problem, which can be explained by his concept of modernity. He outlines a possible solution in the patterns of *rational* conduct and behavior (in a broad, anthropological sense), and in the socio-cultural model of “*educated consciousness*.” Connecting substantial-normative contents to the individuals’ ways of thinking (based on self-determination) and their practical attitudes offers a practicable plan for the modern life conduct that relies on the principle of subjective freedom on the one hand, and wants to remain faithful to the ideal of the good life on the other. By interpolating rationality as an anthropological constant, and education as the socio-cultural carrier of normativity, we have the opportunity to make substantial contents acceptable as objective values to individuals, whose life conduct is based on subjective values, without threatening their subjective freedom and their right to self-determination.

For Hegel, *rational thinking and practical attitude* is a crucial point in the life conduct of modern individuals.⁷⁷ “The right to recognize nothing that I do not perceive as rational is the highest right of the subject, but by virtue of its subjective determination, it is at the same time *formal*; on the other hand, *the right of the rational* – as the objective – over the subject remains firmly established.”⁷⁸ The *subjectivity* of rationality is a basic structural feature of the individual’s lifeworld and life conduct, while its *objectivity* is a structural feature of modern society. Rational life conduct can preserve the individual’s freedom and autonomy, the right to self-determination, and the possibility of realizing it: assured by the very structures of objective rationality – the rule of law, the civil society, and the institutions of the state. “The rational is the high road, which everyone follows and where no one stands out from the rest” – as Hegel

⁷⁶ R, 206 (§ 166).

⁷⁷ R, 36 (Introduction).

⁷⁸ R, 159 (§ 132).

emphasizes.⁷⁹ Rationality as an anthropological constant present in every single human being who thinks, who possesses consciousness and self-consciousness, makes cooperation with others possible. The inclination to cooperation and its practice is essential for the fulfillment of needs: it is the *primary, elementary form of recognizing* the other. It is also necessary to recognize the “objective order” of the institutions, which supplies the social framework for the actualization of liberties, and for the fulfillment of needs. This constellation of freedom and rationality, however, is *not the same as the Aristotelian norm of the good life*. It cannot be the same, for although the institutions and norms of the modern world can act as substantial powers, which Hegel himself acknowledges, he also points out that beside / behind reason understood as an anthropological constant, we in fact face an “objective order” that works by the principles of *modern rationality, the rationality of means and ends*. This in turn lends a *pro-fane, pragmatic* character to the substantial – or seemingly substantial – powers that prevail in the modern age. These powers, in the end, do not express an actual, traditional substantiality any more; from the viewpoint of modernity, they only represent the “*right of objectivity*.” Creon may have represented something similar, albeit in a different manner: not as an honest citizen, but as a great personality.

What is the meaning of this turn, on a closer examination? The will of the human being keeps being directed towards the good, as the essence of the will consists in its substantiality and universality – says Hegel in § 132 of the *Philosophy of Right*. At the same time, the substantiality of the good is supplemented by the “highest right of the subject,” i.e. the right to recognize nothing that I do not perceive as rational. The “right of knowledge,” which is made up of insight as an epistemic form and recognition as an intersubjective act constitutes “the right of moral subjectivity.” The opposing “right of the rational – as the objective – over the subject remains firmly established.” This firmness of objectivity is untouchable: “But whatever I may require in order to satisfy my conviction that an action is good, permissible, or impermissible . . . in no way detracts from the right to objectivity.”⁸⁰ By this time, the “right of objectivity” means the “objective order,” the institutions and laws of the world, and not classic substantial values, even though Hegel uses the slightly misleading term “ethical life” when describing these structures.

⁷⁹ R, 49 (§ 15) – “Rational insight (...) alone gives dignity to the human being” – says Hegel in the Preface to the second edition of the *Encyclopedia*.

⁸⁰ R, 159 (§ 132).

The right of objectivity and the right of (subjective) insight are connected. The right to recognition also joins with them, but not with regard to the substantial contents of the action, as the term ethical life suggests, but with regard to legality, legitimacy. "The right of the subject to know action in its determination of good or evil, legal or illegal."⁸¹ This also highlights the fact that the substantial normativity of the modern world is not organized around *the traditional ethical good*, but, transforming this into the right of objectivity, around the rights belonging to *legality, valid law, legitimacy*. The *right of moral subjectivity* is the counterpoint and supplement of this sphere, and not of substantiality in the ancient sense. This right encompasses the right of the individual's subjective insight and the right of recognition concerning the other(s). As a result of these transformations of substantiality, the *fundamental points of orientation* for individual life conduct in modernity are provided by the duality of the right of objectivity (meaning law, legality, and validity) and the right of moral subjectivity, itself having a dual nature. The practices of modern individuals obtain their legitimacy in the relations of these rights: "since action is an alteration which must exist in an actual world and thus seeks recognition in it, it must in general conform to what is *recognized as valid* in that world."⁸²

In the objective (and not in the traditional sense substantial) normativity of modernity, the idea of the good is replaced by the *orientation to good*. Not orientation to good as such, adds Hegel, but the *pursuit of the welfare* of particular individuals. The individual who acts requires a particular content and a determinate end for the action.⁸³ This gives rise to the task (duty): to do *right* and promote *welfare*, one's own welfare and welfare in its universal determination, the welfare of others. In the framework provided by *right*, which replaces substantial ethical norms, the life conduct of individuals is directed towards *welfare*. In this change, we can see the signs of the (legal) formalization of substantial normativity, as well as its subjectivization and profanization in welfare and economical practicality.⁸⁴ *Ethical good becomes marginal and subjective* due to the

⁸¹ R, 160 (§ 132).

⁸² R, 159 (§ 132).

⁸³ R, 161 (§ 134).

⁸⁴ Hegel treats "simple life" and its relation to philosophy in the preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, in the context of the practical connotation of reason. Hegel uses the term "the instinct of common sense," the instinctive nature of reason to express an important aspect of the practical connotation of reason, its preliminary, given disposition in natural consciousness, the logical equivalent of which is natural logic. Cf. Hegel: *The Science of Logic*. Preface to the second edition. – Hegel links the term "instinct of reason" to the

infinite right of moral subjectivity. In consequence of these basic structural changes, “the prose of ordinary life” can easily nestle in the life conduct oriented by the norms of rationality and *formed* with the mediation of educated consciousness; its actual *contentual* determination being shaped by its *orientation to welfare*. It turns out that as a result of the transformations in the spirit, subjective freedom – as a basic motivation – should be understood as a general formal determination, while its counter-concept, contentual determination, is linked to the life conduct resulting from happiness-motivations and directed towards individual welfare.

We have come to realize that substantial powers, the traditional vehicles of the good are questioned by the developments of modernity. Thus, Hegel's concept of ethical life and his ideal of life cannot be the same as Aristotle's. The infinite freedom of the modern individual becomes not only supreme value, but also the source of the individuals' practical behavior and their claim to a “firm base” in an unstable life. The *ambivalent* nature of modern freedom also presents itself in being extended to every human being, which leads to the devaluation of freedom, and therefore to the questioning of excellence of character. This, in turn, has an effect on the lifeworld of the citizens in modern society, and has its disadvantages for dramatic poetry. In such circumstances, “decency” and “honesty” become supreme values. These, however, are incapable of representing the dramatic, even less the tragic. The superior in human beings, the excellence of character is not only called into question, but doomed to failure. Philosophy has to be able to determine its task concerning the lives of the individuals, the “business of life,” and to fulfill it in these highly complex and ambiguous circumstances.⁸⁵

For these reasons, in Hegel's view, there has never been greater need for points of orientation. In the modern age, the question of attitude and conduct became much more complex and controversial, due to the effect of subjective freedom on life conduct (vacillating attitude, wavering conduct, the claim to consolidation). The modern institutions of ethical life (constitution, division of power, the rule of law) that are organized by the “right of objectivity,” do not by themselves provide sufficient orientation

marginalized need of philosophy in present times. Cf. Preface to the third edition. – The term “the instinct of thinking” occurs in connection with the relation between philosophy and the phenomena of the age. See Preface to the second edition.

⁸⁵ “Geschäft des Lebens” is Hegel's expression. Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, “Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin,” in *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Vol. 10 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979), 414.

and security. Not only because these powers do not have exclusive influence over the life conduct of other individuals, as the direction and quality of their lives is dependent mainly on them, but primarily because the institutions of the modern world, acting as substantial powers, pretend to be something other than what they really are. They conceal that they *operate in the spirit of modern rationality, the logic of ends and functions*. It did not bother Hegel very much, though: he was content to record and describe these changes. He only reacted more sensitively when he had to face hindrances in the rational/functional operation of modern society.

Without a doubt, Hegel points out here one of the tender spots of modernity. We have the impression that in modernity, the question of good life has become the internal affair of philosophy, and has been separated from the “*business of life*.” As a result, philosophy can only approach the “business of life” in detours, by ways of its own transformations (or, to use the Hegelian term, by mediations). Philosophy, interpreting itself as a sphere of culture and education, does not prefer philosophical “truth” in itself, but joins it with the question of the “business of life.” It stresses the practical urge in every human being’s life to contribute to the construction of a “firm base,” indispensable to life.⁸⁶ This way, it can get access to the “simple lives” of ephemeral human beings, and the initially unconscious need deeply hidden in them, to stand on solid ground (*fester Boden*). “Solid ground,” however, that had been given *in advance* in premodern times, has been lost once and for all, due to the aforesaid transformations of substantial powers. Philosophy, on the other hand, as a cultural form of mediation can support those living a “simple life” in their search for a firm base in life. In modern life conduct, the solid ground handed down in tradition and by an indisputable authority are replaced by the claim to a sort of reflected “firm base” (*feste Grundlage*) and a conscious, “stable position” in life (*feste Stellung im Leben*). However, those capable of constructing such a firm base, are those who approach themselves and the world with “rational insight and a rational attitude to actuality.” The individual of the modern age does not receive this attitude ready-made, but acquires this facility of rational conduct through educational forms – “educated consciousness.”

Hegel was aware that the individuals’ lifeworld *cannot* be made stable merely by the truth addressed in the scientific system of philosophy.

⁸⁶ On the problem of “firm foundation” and “fixed position in life” see the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*.

To prove this, we can refer to passages in Hegel's work where the task of training and education, leading to the basic motive of the oeuvre, as well as its tight connection with practical philosophy, is made explicit. In other words, the crucial importance of the "business of life" can be textually documented.

In addition to the Nuremberg writings, the passages cited above, the prefaces to the *Philosophy of Right* and the second edition of the *Encyclopedia* belong here. In this regard the *sketch of the 1818 inaugural address* is also remarkable, where Hegel repeatedly treats the need for philosophy in the "philosophical culture" of the German people. Its internal relation with *every individual's ordinary consciousness* – the early motive of philosophy's intervention into people's lives – is restated in the inaugural address.

... in general, the ground of the actual need of philosophy is presupposed in every (thinking) human being; he starts in general with sensory perception, sensual desires and instincts; an external world lies open before him, and his needs and curiosity draw him to it – the motions of his inner feelings and his heart, his sense of justice and injustice, the sense of self-preservation and honor, etc. This position, however, does not satisfy him; the *rational*, which is *instinctively* inherent in him, and reflection, which directs itself to it, lead him to the *universal*, and to what is original in this apparent world – to search for grounds and causes, laws, and everything that is *lasting* in this changing and unstable world.⁸⁷

The aim of philosophy outlined here is to seek truth "in more or less every person, who awakes to the self-consciousness of thinking." "This need is present in everyone" – states Hegel.⁸⁸ It can take various forms, however. The form adequate to the medium of "simple life" is *instinctive rationality*. The need to reflect – the universal can overstep the limits of instinctive rationality and lead on to the forms of "*educated consciousness*." The enduring and the true, as final, firm points of orientation can be shown in philosophy as a scientific system and its conceptual medium, in the "language of philosophy," which is a form of knowledge only for the few.

Nevertheless, the enduring and the true can be attached to the "business of life," the simple life of ephemeral people, which is possible in the external dimension of practical philosophy (its "exoteric mode"), as a culturally

⁸⁷ Hegel, *Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin*, 406–407.

⁸⁸ Hegel's thoughts on the connections between philosophy, life, ordinary thinking, sciences, religion, and education are extremely interesting, multifold, down-to-earth, and personal in this passage, which I cannot analyse here in detail. *Ibid.*, 408–417.

contextualized shape. This possibility and task of philosophy, which makes itself manifest in the “feeling” of the “ethical power of the spirit” for philosophy itself, reveals in fact the “force and power of actuality.” Philosophy as a cultural shape can turn to every single individual, using “the language of representation.” This dimension of philosophy safeguards the early motive of interference in people’s lives, demonstrating once again how the early motive broadens into a basic motive of the oeuvre. The field where this function operates is representation, imagination, the soul, faith; and it is expressed in the ephemeral people’s language of representation.⁸⁹ The 1818 *Antrittsrede* speaks of the shape of “the felt, the given, the believed, the presumed” which supports the above connection.⁹⁰

Hegel professed from the very start until the end of his life, that philosophy is capable of treating life problems not solely with a set of conceptual tools. This is possible because it positions itself in the cultural sphere of the modern world, and understanding “the business of life,” it takes up an educational function that is more than just exercising an enlightening attitude.⁹¹ Respecting the modern subject’s right to self-determination and particular lifeworld, it chooses the right language – the language of representation, the metaphor, in addition to the language of concept – for its operation. Thus, it goes beyond the boundaries of “instinctive” rationality of simple life, but remains committed to the “business of life.” It inserts “educated consciousness” to ensure the fulfillment of the claims originating from the basic motive of intervention into people’s lives. “Educated consciousness” as an epistemic form stands between the immediate, “instinctively” rational, “ordinary consciousness” of simple life and philosophy, which operates with the “language of concepts.”⁹² Culturally,

⁸⁹ Cf. Preface to the second edition of the *Encyclopedia*.

⁹⁰ Hegel, *Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin*, 408.

⁹¹ Hegel establishes a tight connection between education and his conception of freedom, both in a theoretical and a practical sense. It is expressed clearly in the formula of “Freiheit zur Bildung.” His systematic treatment of “education for freedom” can be found primarily in the *Philosophy of Right*. See especially R §§ 4, 57, 187.

⁹² Cf. Hegel, *Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin*, 414. – The value of “simple life” is treated in more detail in the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of history. The “intangibility” of simple life is highlighted – among others – in the lectures on the philosophy of history: “The religion, the morality of a limited sphere of life – that of a shepherd or a peasant, e.g., – in its intensive concentration and limitation to a few perfectly simple relations of life – has infinite worth; the same worth as the religion and morality of extensive knowledge, and of an existence rich in the compass of its relations and actions. This inner focus – this simple region of the claims of subjective freedom – the home of volition, resolution, and action – the abstract sphere of

it also holds a middle place between philosophy as a scientific system, and cultural forms in a broader sense (art, religion). This intermediate status gives opportunity to mediate between different levels of consciousness: educated consciousness is capable of integrating and communicating various socio-cultural and particular-individual contents at the same time. The early motive of “intervention into people’s lives” made a great contribution to the openness of Hegel’s practical philosophy, as well as to the fact that its conception of modern individuality is still worthy of attention. In the light of discussions in applied ethics, Hegel’s statement, that philosophy must be capable of pointing out the possibilities of the modern versions of good life: welfare and rational life conduct, and communicating-transforming it for the thinking of ephemeral people living a “simple life,” does not seem to have become out of date. This claim can be asserted primarily in the extra-systemic dimension of philosophy, by the cultural function of “training for freedom,” which can rely on the right of self-determination/self-disposal, and can constitute and utilize the forms of “educated consciousness.” This *therapeutic function* of philosophy is not to be underestimated, even though it does not stand in the center of the architectonics of his philosophy and of the textual corpus of the oeuvre.⁹³

6. THE “MEDIOCRITY” OF MODERN INDIVIDUALITY AND THE “PROSE OF LIFE” – FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF “RIGHT RELATION IN THE WHOLE” AND THE NORM OF “DECENT WAY OF LIFE”

The “right relation in the whole” (“*das richtige Verhältnis im Ganzen*”) is the *measure* of the modern individual’s culture of thinking and conduct. This measure is of crucial importance for the *balanced* operation of the different structures and tendencies of modern society, and the *legitimacy/validity* and *actual possibilities* of the right of self-determination of every single particular existence. The conception of the state contains the model of equalization: one function of the state is to consolidate the dispositions and lifeworlds of individuals possessing the right of self-determination.⁹⁴ This consolidation can be achieved by the “*right relation*” to the institu-

conscience – that which comprises the responsibility and moral value of the individual, remains untouched; and is quite shut out from the noisy din of the World’s History...” WH, 52.

⁹³ On the therapeutic function of philosophy, see Michael Quante “Spekulative Philosophie als Therapie?” in *Hegels Erbe*, 324–335.

⁹⁴ The recognition of the “personal singularities,” their particular lifeworlds and rights by the state also serves as a legitimation of the latter. Cf. R § 260. Hegel also remarks here

tions and other people: not merely by institutional regulation, and at the same time not merely by thinking and living in individual isolation. The “right relation” as balanced operation does not simply refer to the articulation of lifeworlds in the legal, economical, social, and political spheres, but includes the rights and claims to realization connected to the *particularity* of individuals and their lifeworlds (and their integration); as well as the *rational* insights, habitual dispositions, intersubjective relations, and corresponding practices that serve to assert these claims. In modern society, Hegel assigned an important role to the model of “*mutual recognition*,” which he described in the *Philosophy of Right* as the cooperation of concrete persons to mutually satisfy their particular needs.⁹⁵ He treated the practical disposition of the modern individual from the viewpoint of the *constant challenge* to look for a *consensus*, not just in order to fulfill current needs, but also to provide enduring satisfaction.⁹⁶ The satisfying of needs generates tensions in economy and in other spheres of society, and the effects of this on the individuals and their lifeworlds should be minimized.

The goal of modern society is to provide a *decent way of life* (“*ordentliche Lebensweise*”) for everyone, permanently and calculably. The models of equalization, such as the measure of right relation in the whole, and mutual recognition serve this *decent way of life*. The extremes of modern economy (the polarization of wealth and poverty) do not only affect the economic, social, and political circumstances in civil society, they also undermine the subjective standpoint of individuals and the quality of their life conduct. Hegel paid close attention to the destructive ethical and psychological effects of this phenomenon. He sensed such effects in the behavior of the rabble and the behavior of those pursuing great wealth, which he described as quite extreme, but which could become, in the future, the idealtypical dynamic in modern society.⁹⁷ The precise

that the state maintains “unity” in the development of the worlds of “subjectivity,” ensuring thereby the stability of individual lifeworlds.

⁹⁵ The Hegelian idea of mutual recognition is a popular topic nowadays, introduced in modern discussions by Siep and Honneth. Cf. Ludwig Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip der praktischen Philosophie: Untersuchungen zu Hegels Jenaer Philosophie des Geistes* (Freiburg: Alber, 1979); Axel Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit: Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001). From recent literature, see *Anerkennung*, ed. Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch and Christopher F. Zurn (Berlin: Akademie, 2009).

⁹⁶ That the satisfaction of needs should extend to the future as well is an important element of Hegel’s conception of need. Cf. S § 434.

⁹⁷ See Erzsébet Rózsa, “Das Prinzip der Besonderheit in Hegels Wirtschaftsphilosophie” in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 182–213.

function of education is to cultivate the “right relation” in individuals, a way of thinking, and a practical disposition in face of the extreme and unstable circumstances of society. Right relation helps to minimize the hazards, the enhancement of which could lead to the destruction of both society as a whole and of individual lifeworlds.

Hegel pointed out how the good life became *problematic* in his social philosophy, and in his conception of modern dramatic poetry through the shortcomings in the conduct of the knight and the honest citizen. Romantic art also draws attention to the fact that “substantial” normativity disappears, replaced by the principle of intimacy on the one hand, and the “objective order” of institutions and laws on the other. The “prose of ordinary life” nestles in both spheres, as the material of art. Human being as “new humanus” (der neue Humanus) no longer has the opportunity to become a hero or a great personality,⁹⁸ and this has a unique explanation. If, it follows from the principle of modernity, everyone has the right to shape oneself into a particular individual, then mediocrity (Mittelmäßigkeit) will prevail.⁹⁹ Hegel does not present the model of the “honest citizen” with the same enthusiasm as he does in the case of Achilles or Antigone. The honest citizen is capable of realizing that which is “higher in human” in his or her life conduct, but only to a certain degree. *Education* as a cultural-social form and *honesty* as a subjective-civic virtue help to *aim at this supreme norm*. However, neither educated consciousness, nor honesty prevent the inferior from nestling in (einnisten) his or her lifeworld.

“*Prose*” – as the specification of actuality in the philosophy of art – is the concept by which we can grasp the socio-cultural condition of the modern individual in the medium of art.¹⁰⁰ The concept of prose sheds light

⁹⁸ Behind the Hegelian term of the “new humanus,” we find key elements of the conception of modern individuality. Hegel introduces the term in the sub-chapter on the formal character of subjectivity, which confirms our supposition in itself. With regard to content, humanus refers to the “universal human character,” “human character in its entire richness.” Inwardness thus becomes the contentual counterbalance of the formal character of subjectivity, the basic principle of modernity. Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról* (Budapest: Atlantisz, 2004), 257. (This Hungarian edition of the Lectures on the Philosophy of Art does not have an English equivalent.)

⁹⁹ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “Das Mittelmäßige im Tragischen. Hegels antike und moderne Antigone in der Phänomenologie des Geistes,” in *Wege zur Wahrheit: Festschrift für Otto Pöggeler zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert and Elisabeth Weisser-Lohann (München: Fink 2009), 195–210.

¹⁰⁰ See Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegel über die Kunst der ‘neueren Zeit’ im Spannungsfeld zwischen der ‘Prosa’ und der ‘Innerlichkeit,’” in *Die Geschichtliche Bedeutung der Kunst und die Bestimmung der Künste*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert and Lu de Vos (München: Fink 2005), 121–144.

on new aspects of individual existence and the perspectives of modernity. The victory of the “prose of life” and mediocrity over the higher in human does not only forecast the end of art, but also the subjectivization of religion. In relation to God, Hegel has spoken of “*subjective religiosity*” as an alternative, which is, however, *ab ovo* contingent: this relation is dependent on the arbitrary choice and decision of the individual. In other words, Hegel raised the issue of the problematic situation of religion and religiosity in modernity not solely in connection with Pascal’s “God is dead” statement, but also in the emphatic contingency of subjective religiosity.¹⁰¹ In the last analysis, these problematic features originate in “*infinite subjective freedom*,” the principle of modernity. This principle, whose historical significance for Hegel is beyond doubt, is *ab ovo* ambiguous: its realization liberates enormous *destructive powers*, which Hegel accounts for in his own way.

Perhaps his position, which is puzzling in many respects, scares off a number of readers even nowadays, inciting denial or reserve. Still, it is worth investigating how he poses the question of individual life and its meaning, within the complexity of his (praised and cursed) *system*, *placing it in their unique macro- and microcosms*. This treasure of thought in Hegel’s heritage can inspire us to approach in a more adequate and more acceptable manner the problem of human existence as individual existence, which has become much more complex and controversial in our day.

But how can we get hold of these life-meanings and phenomena hidden in the setting of Hegelian macro- and microcosms? In the next chapter, I follow in the wake of this “open secret.” I will take a closer look at the different layers and architectonic dimensions of Hegel’s system, as well as the levels, the basic motives, and the textual corpus of the system, in order to explore the extra meaning hidden in them, which in turn helps me to reconstruct the Hegelian theory of modern individuality. The secret is open, inasmuch as in my investigation I utilize the Hegelian system itself.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, “‘Glaube im Gefühl’: Hegels Auffassung der subjektiven Religiosität in Bezug auf die Selbstdeutung und die Selbstbestimmung des modernen Individuums” – See also chapter C.I of the present work.

CHAPTER TWO

EXTRA SIGNIFICANCE IN THE DIMENSIONS OF THE SYSTEM

Thus, the significance to be attached in what follows to the subjective or objective aspects of the will should in each case be apparent from the context, which defines their position with reference to the totality.¹

1. THE REQUIREMENT OF A "THEORY OF CONCEPT" (HÖSLE): ONE STEP BACK TOWARDS A "PLATONIZING CONCEPTUALITY" (BRANDOM), OR LIBERATING THE CONSTITUTIVE ROLE HIDDEN IN THE DIMENSIONS OF THE SYSTEM?

In the 1970s, Charles Taylor called attention to the importance of categorical connections and systematic approaches in Hegel. Taylor, however, confined himself to two abstract propositions on cosmic reason and human rationality.² More recently, Vittorio Hösle has pointed out that the neopragmatic Hegel renaissance took no account of Hegel's theory of concept.³ As Hösle remarked, "Hegel wants significantly more than McDowell and Brandom. He certainly wants too much; nevertheless, his theory of concept has some aspects to be taken more seriously in the twenty-first century – inasmuch as the analytic debate on natural kinds helps us to get a deeper understanding of the Hegelian project – aspects which at least raise the *basic problem of Hegel's theory of concept* that is *still neglected* by the analytic Hegel renaissance."⁴

¹ R, 56 (§ 26).

² Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 488.

³ Vittorio Hösle also notes a basic variance in neopragmatic discussion: "The crucial difference between McDowell's and Brandom's reception of Hegel lies in the fact that the former interprets Hegel from the nature-spirit relation, while the latter from the problem of intersubjectivity [...]. They fail to notice the special position of certain concepts that are capable of grasping the essence of an entity, nor do they possess a theory of conceptualization; in their case, the concepts themselves remain given." Cf. Vittorio Hösle, "Was kann man von Hegels objektiv-idealistischer Theorie des Begriffs noch lernen, das über Sellars, McDowells und Brandoms Anknüpfungen hinausgeht?" *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 30 (2005): 139.

⁴ Ibid., 142 (emphasis added.)

The question is, in what sense Höhle's claim to turn to Hegel's theory of concept is justified, especially in a field that is still packed with misunderstandings, and *cannot be reconstructed in its entirety in the usual way, i.e. relying on texts taken directly from his works*. As for misunderstandings, we may refer to some recent statements / evaluations in otherwise outstanding accounts of Hegel, like the "de-individualization" mentioned by Manfred Frank, the "over-institutionalization" attributed to Hegel by Axel Honneth, or the "enlargement" of the subject by the admittance of objectivity, treated by Terry Pinkard.⁵ These statements show how even some of the most excellent Hegel scholars fail to pay sufficient attention to the relevance of the systematic and conceptual connections present in Hegel's practical philosophy for the topic of individuality. We may also cite Robert Brandom, who insists upon "practical attitude" as a substantial constituent of individuality, without linking it to "culture," though he does recognize the importance of the latter. Nonetheless, a complementary relation suggests that there is in fact such a connection in Hegel: one between the "practical attitudes" of different forms of subjectivity and spirit understood as culture, which makes objective every manifestation of human life.⁶

To Höhle's requirement of a theory of concept, or the lack of thereof, we can also add another problematic feature of the above interpretations, namely that they skate over the complementary model of forms of subjectivity and institutional forms in Hegelian practical philosophy.⁷ The perception and recognition of this model is of essential importance, even

⁵ Cf. Manfred Frank, "Subjektivität und Intersubjektivität," in *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbsterkenntnis* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1991), 458; Axel Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit. Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), 113; Terry Pinkard, "Innen, Außen und Lebensformen: Hegel und Wittgenstein," in *Hegels Erbe* ed. Christoph Halbig, Michael Quante, and Ludwig Siep (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 256.

⁶ Robert Brandom, "Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution. Die Struktur von Wünschen und Anerkennung," in *Hegels Erbe*, 42–54. For a conceptual framework in regard to practical attitude, which accommodates in the will "motives," "circumstances," "stimuli," and "instincts," see Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften in Werke in zwanzig Bänden, Vol. 4* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986) 222 ff. The whole text seems extremely important for the study of practical attitudes. In the framework of practical consciousness – practical potential and practical conduct are the theoretical and practical aspect of the former – Hegel treats such problems which reappear in the neo-pragmatic discussion.

⁷ The notion of a "complementary Hegelian model of individuals and institutions" was introduced by Dean Moyer to shed light on the conceptual difference between the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *The Philosophy of Right*. In the present study I aim at reinterpreting the term, supposing that Hegel uses complementary models in both works, although with different emphases. Cf. Dean Moyer, "Die Verwirklichung meiner Autorität: Hegels

though in itself it cannot provide us with sufficient means to solve the problem of finding a particular textual location for modern individuality. Nevertheless, there seems to be a way out: it is worth starting along the lines of systematic dimensions and their corresponding conceptuality. In other words, we can start with known concepts – those which, by their nature, directly conform to the system – and proceed towards less well-known conceptual constellations, which can only be fully recognized along the way. We may not only take a few steps closer to locating modern individuality in the text this way, we may also explore a promising extra significance regarding our subject-matter. By outlining the methodological principles in our procedure, we may gain a basic point of reference.

The problems arising can be eliminated partly by making an effort to put forward Hegel's own claim to conceptuality, in the original Hegelian sense. It also means that *beyond* Hösle's demand, I take seriously Robert Brandom's warning of the danger of Platonizing conceptuality.⁸ To prevent the latter, I turn to Hegel himself: I lay stress upon such considerations which enable me to point to the systematic dimension of the problematic of individuality, and the layers of significance that present themselves in them. The division of the systematic dimension in Hegel is twofold: it means linear system-building on the one hand, and circular dynamics on the other. In this framework, Hösle's demand for a theory of concept gains manifoldly extended and modified meanings for determining the conceptual sphere relevant for my topic.

It is from the perspective of systematic dimension that I pose the question of the specific architectonic and conceptual aspects of conceptuality that belong to practical individuality. My undertaking relies on the conviction that the "theory of concept" bears significance not as a preliminary methodological tool, or as a general logical and/or epistemological principle: it only acquires such significance "*en route*," during the articulation of the subject-matter and unfolding its specific contents. In the course of this, I rely on some of Hegel's own terms ("*particular existence*," "*inner world*," "*honest citizen*" etc.), whose common feature is that they do not belong to the forefront of the Hegelian set of concepts:

komplementäres Modell von Individuen und Institutionen," in *Hegels Erbe*, especially 209–216.

⁸ For his view on the difference between platonic and pragmatic strategies and also on the danger of platonizing conceptuality, see Robert Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen. Eine Einführung in den Inferentialismus*. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 9–13.

taxonomically they occupy a rather unstable and enigmatic position.⁹ My hope is that a partial explanation for this fact was provided by the previous chapter. The text corpus, on the other hand, is *not* to be found on this or that page of a given work. Where, then? The answer to the question may also be found “*en route*.”

The context of my study is Hegelian *practical philosophy*, although individuality is the subject matter of his logic and natural philosophy as well, and neither the logical conceptual framework of the individual, the particular, and the general, nor the natural forms of individuation are irrelevant for a practical philosophical thematization in the field of the spirit.¹⁰ *Here and now*, however, I have to refrain from the closer examination of such formations, and confine myself to a few passing remarks.

For my purpose, practical philosophy should be taken in two meanings: 1. I suppose that the whole territory of the spirit belongs here, and 2. I refer to the overall significance of practical orientation in Hegel's early philosophical inquiry for the whole oeuvre, and the thematic continuity it presents. This double horizon of practical philosophy leads to the *conceptual construction of practical individuality* as a comprehensive and complex form of subjectivity.¹¹ It contains in itself both systematically and historically *all of the possible forms of subjectivity*, the various agents of history, of social, political, and economic life, as well as the subjects of private life, and the forms of subjectivity thematized in the media of art, religion, and philosophy. As for now, however, I focus on *modern individuality*, which is the conceptual construction of particular, *historically limited and socio-culturally contextualized* shapes of practical individuality, such as *the knight at the dawn of modernity*, *the honest citizen at its zenith*, and *the comedian at its twilight*. Each of these three types of individuality is an ideal type corresponding to a given phase of the “modern age.” The fact that Hegel treated these types – their lifeworld, their emotions, temperaments, ways of thinking, motivations, characteristic practices, etc. – on several occasions as practical emotions in the subjective spirit, or in various chapters of the *Philosophy of Right*, as well as in his philosophy of art and philosophy of religion, shows this is indeed the case. It also means that in order to get a proper picture of them, one has to aim at a reconstruction *in relation to the relevant elements of subjective*,

⁹ See the previous chapter.

¹⁰ Cf. “The natural forms of individuation.”

¹¹ Cf. “Practical individuality.”

objective, and absolute spirit as a linear basic structure. My conviction is that the liberation of the *potential meaning* hidden in the different layers of the system, the relations thereof, and their corresponding conceptual framework offers a good chance to fulfill the requirement of a “theory of concept.” While my procedure sets out from the linear dimension, it inevitably leads to the circular-dynamic dimension of the system, as is apparent from the inclusion of the relations between the elements already present in the linear. It is exactly this “border crossing” that makes the liberation of extra significance possible.

2. THE GENERAL FEATURES OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE SYSTEM AND THE LIBERATION OF THEIR EXTRA SIGNIFICANCE FOR A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HEGELIAN TOPICS OF INDIVIDUALITY

The system of Hegel is often described as one with *linear architectonics*, which in turn heavily influences interpretations of his concept of individuality. As the conceptual sphere of the spirit presents itself in the series of subjective, objective, and absolute spirit, it may seem that Hegel underestimates the problem of the individual. By referring exclusively to the linear architectonics of the system, Hegel scholarship has tended to focus on the priority of the absolute idea in a conceptual sense, or that of the absolute spirit, causing grave misunderstandings concerning the Hegelian sense of individuality.¹²

Interpretations that follow *exclusively* the path of the linear system are still to take note of some important facts. A few years after the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, in his Nuremberg years, Hegel distinguished between two dimensions and two tasks of philosophy with regard to the encyclopedic system: a scientific dimension, and one consisting in education and training (culture).¹³ To both of these dimensions he attached particular tasks. In other words, he gave the system a meaning that pointed beyond the external-linear architectonics, resulting in a conceptual division: *linear and circular modes of concept-building* involve different procedures, which

¹² One of its lasting effects is the extreme simplification as to what constitutes the supreme subject in Hegel: since in the sphere of the objective spirit, the supreme subject is the ruler (monarch), while in the totality of the system it is the philosopher, one can be easily led to the absurd conclusion, that Hegel aimed solely at crowning himself (and his philosophy) as the completion of the system.

¹³ Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986).

in turn exercise influence on the structure and meaning of the concepts themselves. What is more, the mutual reference and intermingling of these modes of concept-building, being the consequence of the Hegelian scope and principle of the totality, had a significance-bearing role that the conceptuality of a merely linear structure could not possess in itself. All this has an obvious import for Hegel's conceptuality. In the Nuremberg writings we see as already present some of the basic conceptual and architectonic criteria of the later systems of Heidelberg and Berlin. The texts show more than just the youthful motive and thoroughly practical orientation of the philosopher to "intervene in people's life." The direct claim to intervention had to be modified, since philosophy as a scientific system was no longer capable of or entitled to do this. Hegel chose a novel solution, that of interpreting philosophy not merely as a scientific system, but also as a cultural formation. This double perspective – internal and external, or, in Hegelian terminology, "esoteric" and "exoteric" – opened a new possibility to safeguard his early motivation, without giving up philosophy as a scientific-systematic enterprise.¹⁴ He endowed philosophy as a cultural phenomenon with some particular functions, like training and education in culture, which from the double perspective outlined above proved to be components of the mature, established form of the system as well.¹⁵ The 1811 Nuremberg claim for a "moral training and education" echoes the early motives of "the needs of philosophy" and the intervention into people's life. At the same time, it looks ahead to the later task of practical philosophy as "educating and training for liberty," which appears in the *Philosophy of Right* in 1820.¹⁶ This common set of motives is connected by the double perspective of the philosophical system.

So what is the relevance of the multiple layers of architectonics of the philosophical system for the notion of individuality in Hegel? Because of this multi-layered characteristic, neither the problem of practical life and practical individuality, nor the topic of modern individuality can be explained *only* by reconstructing the linear succession of the subjective, objective, and absolute spirit, and their corresponding conceptual framework. The concepts of the science of pure idea – such as the individual, the particular, and the general – cannot be applied directly to the sphere

¹⁴ Cf. "The esoteric and exoteric mode of philosophizing."

¹⁵ For Hegel's early motive concerning "the needs of philosophy," see the *Differenzschrift*.

¹⁶ Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Rede zum Schuljahrsabschluß am 2 September 1811," in *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften*.

of the spirit, the field of practical individuality. We need transformations, a specification of the appropriate topics of the spirit in regard to the logical triad of concepts just mentioned.¹⁷ The logical structure of *the individual, the particular, and the general* constitutes a *conceptuality* that reveals the *linear aspect of the system* in a direct sense. In addition to its “application,” however, the exploration and application of another sort of conceptuality is needed as well, altering the logical shapes of the individual, the particular, and the general, and also their original meaning. This act of exploration takes place in the world of the *spirit*, resulting in the conceptual constellation brought forth by the *abstract-subjective “particular existence”* thematized in the *different relations* of the spirit, the *concrete-particular lifeworld* of the modern individual, and their communication.¹⁸ The reconstruction of the *honest citizen* can be seen as the result of a similar procedure, using various passages on the subjective, objective, and absolute spirit in the aforesaid sense. The conceptual constellations brought forth this way (*lifeworld and honest citizen*) offer a real opportunity, and an extra significance for the reconstruction of the subject matter of modern individuality.¹⁹ In my view, representing the *concrete conceptual framework* corresponding to each relevant subject matter as derived from the *twofold, linear and circular inner structure* of the system is in accordance with Hegel’s intentions and the spirit of his system.

We also have to bear in mind the “*exoteric*” *dimension* which crosses the borders of the system, highlighting the importance of philosophy as a cultural phenomenon and its cultural function.²⁰ This in turn represents the Hegelian claim to give philosophy a significance in the sphere of practical life, that goes beyond the framework and parameters of a purely scientific approach. This claim has its origins in the basic motives of Hegel’s philosophy that underlay his scientific system.²¹

¹⁷ Hegel repeatedly called attention to the special importance of the methodological and conceptual connections between logic as the science of pure idea, and the science of the spirit, as well as to the necessary transformation of logical concepts in the sphere of the spirit. Let us remember the example of the first paragraphs in the introduction of the *Philosophy of Right*, where the logical shapes of generality, particularity and individuality are specified in the medium of objective spirit by the overall concepts of practical life and will, referring to his logic. See R, 25–64.

¹⁸ See the previous chapter.

¹⁹ For a treatment of the conceptual-phenomenological approach, see the previous chapter.

²⁰ See the previous chapter.

²¹ For the problem of basic motives in Hegel’s practical philosophy, see Erzsébet Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System: Zu Grundmotiven von Hegels praktischer Philosophie* (München: Fink, 2005), especially 13–102.

Difficulty arises from the fact that the *basic motives and their related functions can rarely be detected in the texts in an explicit form, while they are of crucial importance for the whole oeuvre and its particular subtopics*. First, they show a substantial-conceptual continuity in the different consecutive systems present in Hegel's works, refuting the common prejudice that finds radical discontinuities in Hegel that distinguish the young and the mature author. Second, the basic motive – the original practical orientation of philosophy – has a *metaphilosophical, meaning-constituting* feature: possessing and recognizing this motive makes philosophy – the “subject” of modern society, operating with adequate concepts – capable of addressing “everyone, every individual” concerning the questions about the meaning of one's own life.²² The claim to make his philosophical program accessible to a wider audience was often restated emphatically by Hegel, especially during his Berlin years.²³

The means of fulfilling this task is education and training. Hegelian philosophy sees itself as a medium, which – originating from its basic motive – takes on the duty of intervening in people's lives, training and educating them for liberty.²⁴ Note that this dimension and appointment of Hegelian philosophy cannot be found *in* the system, rather *on* the system:

²² For the “interests of life,” see G. W. F. Hegel, “Berliner Antrittsrede,” in *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Vol. 11 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1997)

²³ E.g. in his *Inaugural Address Delivered at the University of Berlin* (1818), in the preface of the *Philosophy of Right* (1820), and in the preface of the second edition of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline* (1830).

²⁴ The special importance of training in Hegel's mature years is in no irreconcilable contradiction with the earlier, critical assessment of it in his work on the difference between Fichte's and Schelling's philosophy. “The training of the age” in the latter passage refers to a limited, deceased form of knowledge. In the framework of the institutional world of the objective spirit, training retains this meaning in connection with the intellect, as opposed to unifying reason. Training as a socio-cultural form, however, has to assume this role as well, to communicate the ideas and principles of the modern world (subjective freedom and reason) for every individual. Here belong also those forms of knowledge regarding God and the Absolute, that are expressed by art, religion, and philosophy in different ages. Thus, training can rely on the superior present in the human being even in the modern age. In the encyclopedic philosophy of the spirit, Hegel refers to the outstanding role of training in relation to philosophy, saying: “*The absolute is the spirit*; this is the highest definition of the absolute. – Finding this definition, conceiving its meaning and contents was – so to speak – the absolute tendency of all training and philosophy, the point towards which every religion and science made its efforts; it is only these efforts that make world history intelligible.” S, § 384. Therefore, training is more than just a matter of individuals, or “singular subjects.” Cf. S, § 387. Training is not merely formal, inasmuch as it is also a “reasoning unification,” taking over the function of speculative reason. Cf. *The Philosophy of Right*.

which refers to the “exoteric mode” of philosophy operating as culture.²⁵ The difference between inner and outer, scientific and cultural dimensions appears in *language* as well. The language of philosophy, the “language of concept” is not capable of performing the task of philosophy in training and education.²⁶ This task presupposes the use of the “language of representation/imagination.”²⁷ Thus, conceptuality is supplemented by a *metaphorical* mode of expression, which is not alien to a philosophy struggling to extend its own boundaries. This language will play an important role in the *phenomenological approach*, e.g. describing the conduct and character of the knight and the honest citizen, those heroes of the different ages of modernity.²⁸

Referring to the basic motive of Hegelian philosophy, the twofold structure of the system and its functions helps us to meet the difficulty of not immediately possessing a text corpus in respect of my main subject, the question of modern individuality. From this fact other tasks follow, which can be tackled by a further investigation of the dimensions of the system.

My original question concerned the significance of Hegel's theory of concept regarding the subject matter of modern individuality. In outlining my response, I aim at avoiding the danger of Platonizing conceptuality. It seems that the extra meaning hidden in the dimensions of the system offers a good opportunity to achieve this purpose. The preliminary phase of my investigation has revealed the shortcomings of a procedure that uses only the logical apparatus of singular concepts or logical shapes

²⁵ For the significance of distinguishing between esoteric and exoteric modes of philosophy in and on the system of Hegel, see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegels Auffassung der Versöhnung und die Metaphorik der ‘Vorrede’ der Rechtsphilosophie. Risse am System?,” *Hegel-Studien* 32 (1997), 137–160.

²⁶ For the problem of the twofold use of language, see the preface in the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, and also Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegels Auffassung der Versöhnung und die Metaphorik der ‘Vorrede’ der Rechtsphilosophie.” (1997).

²⁷ In the introduction of the *Philosophy of Right*, treating the questions of scientific method, Hegel makes a remark on the relations between concept, representation, and language: “In philosophical cognition [...] the chief concern is the *necessity* of a concept, and the route by which it has become a *result* is its proof and deduction. Thus, given that its *content* is necessary *for itself*, the second step is to look around for what corresponds to it in our ideas and language.” R, 27 (§ 2) (Note that *Vorstellung* is translated sometimes as “representation,” sometimes as “idea” in the same passage.)

²⁸ For a phenomenological approach, see Barbara Merker, “Jenseits des Hirns,” in *Subjektivität und Anerkennung. Beiträge zu Hegels Philosophie des Geistes*, ed. Barbara Merker, Georg Mohr, and Michael Quante (Paderborn: Mentis, 2003).

(individual, particular, general): we need a wider and more complex conceptual framework. To understand modern individuality, we cannot rely solely on the logical concepts of generality, particularity, and individuality: what we need is an exploration of the connections between these concepts, and the proper conceptuality and systematic dimensions of the spirit. So far, this is the field of the “language of concept.” On the other hand, the description of the ideal types linked to the different ages of modern individuality – the knight and the honest citizen – required from Hegel not only a phenomenological approach (see his reliance on contemporary German drama for examples), or some specific conceptual constellations (the lifeworld of the citizen on the intersection of rights, motivations, private life, and profession), but also the use of metaphorical linguistic tools.²⁹

3. THE IMPORT OF THE INNER STRUCTURE AND THE DYNAMIC ARCHITECTONICS OF THE PARTICULAR SYSTEM OF THE SPIRIT FOR A RECONSTRUCTION IN THE FIELD OF INDIVIDUALITY

Not only do basic motives fail to appear *overtly* at any given point of the system: the same holds for such crucially important topics as the theory of modern individuality, the *locus* of which is traceable only in a general sense in the spirit, in the field of practical philosophy. Locating modern individuality and its concept requires further specification in regarding textual inquiry and method. What we find concerning the modern individual in different passages regarding the spirit is first of all a *linear succession* of various forms and degrees of the spirit, that is somehow parallel with a *corresponding linear series of isolated forms of subjectivity*. In § 190 of the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel cites as examples the abstract person, the subject, the family-member, and the citizen as forms of subjectivity in the objective spirit. These forms of subjectivity are the abstract, isolated determinations of individuality, in accordance with the linear principle of the system.³⁰

The architectonics and the adequate conceptual sphere of the other dimension of the system appears and can be grasped at the points of intersection between the forms and grades of the spirit, i.e., in the relations of

²⁹ See the previous chapter.

³⁰ “In right, the object is the *person*, at the level of morality, it is the *subject*, in the family, the *family-member*, and in civil society in general, the *citizen*.” R, 228 (§ 190).

subjective, objective, and absolute spirit. In the framework of the *dynamic-relational architectonics*, the determinations of the subject no longer present themselves in isolation, but in mutual reference, which in turn mediates their self-reference. *Modern individuality* as a conceptual construction becomes manifest exactly in these complex, dynamic relations, and is *not given* at a certain fixed point of the system of the spirit. This individuality is “created” in the unfolding relations of the (self) determinations of the spirit as subject, and thus makes itself manifest for us in the process of reconstructing this self-construction and self-understanding.

The shapes of individuality determine – interpret and create – themselves as specific and concrete entities in complex relations and movements.³¹ It is something worth acknowledging in the process and content of my enterprise as well. To the epistemic and practical elements of modern individuality’s self-determination, which arise first in the subjective spirit, the objective spirit adds its specific institutional background, as well as legal and ethical norms. These components *together* mark the space of action, where the individual – anyone and everyone – interprets and constitutes oneself and one’s worlds, inner world and lifeworld.

Among these dynamic relations, *relationality* is worthy of special interest, as a peculiarity of Hegel’s philosophy. Recently, Herbert Schnädelbach, and later, Robert Brandom took note of it.³² Relationality is something that Hegel describes in numerous passages as “Verhältnis.” The term “relation” focuses on the aspect of practical life that human beings are not isolated, but always stand in relations (im Verhältnis). I and we, I and the world, subject and object, human being and God, are all different

³¹ See Robert Brandom, “Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution. Die Struktur von Wünschen und Anerkennung,” in *Hegels Erbe*, 46–77.

³² Schnädelbach discusses rationality within logic as “absolute relationality,” as mediation. This means that “a concept can only express what it means in relation to other concepts; meaning is constituted only in this mediation, just like the relation itself.” *Hegels Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften (1830): Ein Kommentar zum Systemgrundriss von Hermann Drüe u. a.*, edited by Herbert Schnädelbach (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000), 95. – In other words, meaning cannot be separated from the system (ibid. 107). Schnädelbach still thinks that there is no change of paradigm in Hegel: only a re-definition of the relation between the Self and the forms of thinking. This is the attempt of logic to lead the reflectivity of thought from the immediacy of the idea of being through absolute relationality to the unity of idea, i.e. truth (ibid. 95). – Brandom’s definition of relationality is different: “The Hegelian version of expressivism is attractive because its approach to conceptuality is pragmatic and inferentialist, but also because it is *relationalist*, in the sense that he construes implicit and explicit – at least partly – by their mutual expressive relation.” Robert Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen*, 53.

relations of human life as individual life.³³ Relationality, just as system-dimensions, carries the promise of discovering extra meaning for the topic of individuality.

That the importance of relationality is in accordance with Hegel's own intentions is proven by the following. The topic of individuality was not exposed first in § 190 of the objective spirit: the first form of individuality explored in the sphere of the subjective spirit had been the *Self as abstract, subjective individuality*. The Self is characterized by *motivations* inciting practice or action, including everything from instincts and passions to "the totality of practical feeling." These various motivational elements add up as *happiness*, one of the *basic motivations* of activities. In happiness a wide range of natural-immediate and subjective-arbitrary motivations are summed up.³⁴ Following the linear architectonic, Hegel also adds *freedom* to happiness as the other basic practical motivation in the field of tension between practical and free spirit, and, with a strong normative emphasis, holds freedom in much higher esteem than happiness. He follows Kant in this, albeit his conception differs in many regards from that of his ancestor.

This linear division, however, does not present the complete sense of what is at stake. We have to take one step further from the abstract, subjective-internal world of the Self to the scene of the shapes, motivations, practices, and institutional background – i.e. the *contextualization* – of individuality, treated in the objective spirit.

In other words, we are forced to change pace *en route*, referring the elements of the linear structure, the shape of the Self given in the subjective spirit, and its subjective-inner contents (motivations) to the shapes and

³³ If we do not insist on absolute relationality, and distinguish between *external and internal* relations, it becomes clear that Hegel takes into consideration transitory relations as well, and that external relations can pass over to internal ones, and vice versa. External relation is the relation between the human being and "external nature," and – historically – between the human being and God, which dominated religions before Christianity, first of all Judaism. The relation of the individual to himself or herself is not external, as under normal circumstances it becomes more and more internal through processes of self-cognition as processes of training during the course of one's life. Internal relations are easier to circumscribe: self-relection, self-determination, and subjective freedom form a set of concepts the center of which is internality. Let us recall at this point Spinoza's idea of *causa sui* or Aristotle's idea of self-sufficiency, which might have influenced Hegel. The internal relationality of practical individuality is treated systematically by Hegel in the theory of morality.

³⁴ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, "Von der Glückseligkeit zur Freiheit. Systematische Grundlegung des Lebens als besondere Existenz in Hegels Philosophie des Geistes," in *Das Leben denken: Hegel-Jahrbuch 2006 Erster Teil*, 280–286 (Berlin: Akademie, 2006).

contents of the objective spirit. This also means activating the circular structure of the system in the field of a specific subject matter and its conceptual sphere. By exploring the layers of meaning and the conceptuality appearing at the point of intersection between these two dimensions of the system, and revealing their relations, i.e., also *en route*, we can obtain the *adequate textual corpus*.

In the objective spirit, we meet with different types of the subject in different *social contexts*: person in abstract law, subject in morality, spouse in marriage, family member in the family, concrete person and *Bürger* in civil society, citizen in the state. However, we also draw the forms of subjectivity and motivations of the subjective spirit into the objective spirit. It happens in the concept of the *will*: the dynamic structure thus acts to integrate the elements of the linear structure. In this dynamic process of integration, forms of subjectivity acquire new meaning: their motivations, goals, desires gain a *new sort of content*. It is no longer an internal and natural-immediate content, as it once was for the Self and its subjective motivations. Now, as parts of the fabric of society, none of them can act independently of being a family member, a *Bürger*, a citizen, etc., while now the subjective-internal content that they obtained as Selves, also belongs here. But their *subjective* motivations, like the pursuit of happiness as an abstract content, as they get integrated in the objective spirit, become reinterpreted and supplemented by the inclusion of the substantial (or modified substantial) norms and contents of ethical life.³⁵ *Concrete* individuality, the result of these transformations, is the form of subjectivity that steps forth from the interconnections of the above statuses, roles, motivations, goals, practices, and is expressed in the constellations of concepts which describe this form in its transformations. There is a satisfactory explanation why it happens *here and now*. The realization, or concrete-practical actualization of the purely internal, subjective motives of the Self was impossible in the subjective spirit. Motivations had to get into the medium of *will*, which contains all active elements of the individual, such as motivations, goals, practices, and the realization of these, and transforms them into the corresponding structures of the objective spirit, the institutional-normative world, and the concrete medium of the practices and lifeworlds of a particular form of subjectivity. Subjective motivations mediated and transformed by the will can then be realized in the practical activities of the socially embedded subjects (legal

³⁵ Cf. the "right of objectivity" in chapter A.I.5.

person, moral individual, family member, concrete person, *Bürger*), in an intersubjective way, directed by norms, and in an institutional medium, without having to give up their particular individuality. This is how the profound interconnection of the components and relations of the subjective and the objective spirit makes itself manifest: it brings to light an *extra significance* which cannot be detected by examining the linear dimension alone.

The extra significance appears by exploring the hidden potential in the intercourse between the linear and circular dimensions of the system, and it takes shape in the *conceptual constellations* combined from the concepts belonging to it. Not as a mathematical sum of these concepts, but as a *self-subsistent complex*, as we have seen in the case of the concrete person in the first part, and just now in the case of concrete practical individuality. The various transformations that take place in individual life conduct – which is a basic feature of biological and human life – can be grasped and expressed in these conceptual constellations.³⁶ The *conceptual constellation* in turn points not only to the *extra significance*, but also to the *textual corpus* we have been searching for: it gives us the clue to the mystery – the open secret.

To sum up the genesis of the conceptual constellation of concrete practical individuality: *motivations* (desires) appearing in individuals – as abstract Selves – first in an isolated and subjective manner, become, by the transformations that take place in the objective spirit – the social, political, and economical worlds as well as the private lifeworlds – *concrete structural moments* of the now socially contextualized, cooperating individuals' practical activities. The motivations of the Self, which in the subjective spirit remained abstractly subjective, now become embedded in the practical and normative social-institutional context, and by ways of particular-concrete *practices* acquire both a concrete-social and an actual-individual nature, obtaining an extra significance that is advantageous both for self-interpretation and cooperation. All these can be expressed by conceptual constellations: the *linear series* of the Self, the willing self, the legal person, the self-determining individuality, the family member, the particular person, the citizen, etc. while their *internal relations are all contained in the adequate conceptual constellation*, the historically contextualized shape of practical individuality, i.e., modern individuality.

³⁶ Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, *Der Mensch als Mangelwesen und das Bedürfnis der Technik im Spannungsfeld zwischen Natur und Kultur bei Hegel*, forthcoming.

A further example of the *relevance* of conceptual constellation is the *system of needs* explicated in the objective spirit. Its origins can be traced back to the abstract-subjective world of *instincts and desires* investigated in the subjective spirit, which are articulated as *happiness* motivations. These “abstract” instincts and desires are indispensable all the same: they are the subjective and natural, and in this sense, abstract foundations, and what is more, components of the differentiated and complex system of needs that develops under the actual, complex economic conditions of modern society. The first, immediate subject of modern economy is the “*particular person*”: the “concrete person,” who – in contrast to the Self’s unmediated self-reference – is *aware* of its own needs and their particularity, but also knows that one has to give up isolation in order to satisfy those needs.³⁷ This transformation of the natural and subjective shapes of instincts and desires appears in the system of needs as a basic relation of objective and subjective spirit, which can be grasped by the constellation of the above concepts (instincts, desires, happiness, needs; Self, willing self, concrete, particular person).

In these conceptual constellations (the mutual reference of the Self and the other forms of subjectivity), Hegel models the *empirically universal* feature of modernity: that *every single human being* is a Self, a legal person, a *Bürger*, a family member and a citizen, in the *particular* framework of one’s *own* life. Everyone has a *right* to this. Everyone is driven or moved to act by happiness and freedom, which motivate in one’s *own, particular* way. These elements and contents add up and become manifest in every single human being’s own particular lifeworld and in one’s own particular manner. This conceptual constellation serves exactly the purpose of expressing this feature. It is not arbitrary, because it can be traced back to an actual base in life. “Particular existence” (as the abstract framework of life given in the subjective spirit) and lifeworld (as the concrete sphere of life determined in the objective spirit combined of the elements of goals and practices, norms and institutions) constitute the contents of the conceptual constellation in question.³⁸ In this constellation, the form of subjectivity is no longer an abstract Self, nor a divided subject, as legal person, family member, citizen, etc., but a *concrete-particular person determining one’s peculiar, actual shape, one’s characteristic mode of existence, and particular, concrete lifeworld*. All this results from the relations

³⁷ Cf. chapter A.I.6.

³⁸ Ibid.

and transformations of the aforementioned, successive, linear forms of subjectivity. The *practical connotation of reason legitimizes* the adequate (re)construction of the Hegelian topic of modern individuality made possible by such familiar conceptual constellations.³⁹

As we have seen, the epistemic forms and subjective motivations, given in the linear structure of the subjective spirit, do not get lost in the objective dynamic dimensions of Hegel's system. On the contrary: they combine as "*inner world*," and as such, they get built into the practical activities of particular individuals, in the worlds and actualities, social, political, economic, cultural formations of the objective spirit, as well as in the works of art, religious formations, and philosophical achievements belonging to the absolute spirit. "*Inner world*" is a constituent of the subjective, the objective, and the absolute spirit alike.⁴⁰ This world makes room for the various epistemic forms (temperament, feeling, insight, memory, faith, etc.) in the first place; second, it serves as a motivational medium for the individuals. This can be realized in the *lifeworld* at the point of intersection of private life and substantial life (*the points of contact between family and civil society, private life and profession*). From this point of view, it is comprehensible that subjective-individual epistemic forms, feeling, insight, etc., and subjective-individual practical motivations, instincts, desires, happiness, which Hegel originally introduced in the subjective spirit, reappear in the system of needs, or more generally, within the scope of the objective spirit. These epistemic forms and practical motivations appear purely subjectively in the sphere of the subjective spirit, and in an abstract-universal form in abstract law. By contrast, in the socio-cultural and lifeworld spheres of the objective spirit (in the family and in the civil society), practical motivations become contextualized both socially and individually: they are determined in their *particular concreteness*, which in turn affects the character of the inner world (motivations, ideas, goals).

³⁹ In the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel discusses the ontological and epistemological connotation of reason in the context of the so-called double thesis (Doppelsatz) on actual as rational. Cf. Dina Emundts and Rolf-Peter Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel: Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 32–37, 66–68. However, this passage also highlights the practical connotation of reason: this is what Hegel calls "rational insight" and "rational relation to actuality." See R, Preface.

⁴⁰ "Inner world" is present in Hegel's early writings and his late lectures on the philosophy of art as well. The primary systematic locus of inner world is the self-reflective and self-determining subjectivity of morality.

Both the subjective-individual and the universal-normative aspects get integrated into the *particular concreteness* of the lifeworld and the corresponding inner world, the immediate space of self-interpretation and self-determination. On the one hand, this *integrating movement* unfolds itself as a transformation influenced by the forms and norms of cooperation, as well as contexts of the motivations belonging to the objective spirit; on the other hand, it can be detected in the practical philosophical *application* and specification of the references of the *logical shape* of particularity on universality and individuality. This application, however, is not a simple, rectilinear motion, but the product of the transformations and relations given in the circular-dynamic dimension of the system, and the conceptual constellations capable of grasping them.⁴¹ *Upon the first, linear structure of the spirit, a second, dynamic structural level is built, pulling down parts of the former "en route."*

Of course, transformations do not only take place in the motions between the subjective and objective spirit. One example is the "*inner world*," which has great importance in the sphere of the absolute spirit as well. Other examples are the epistemic forms and practical motivations which originate in subjective spirit, but can also be found in *works of art, religious forms and phenomena*. Happiness and freedom are also objects of works of art and religions, although not as abstract-subjective motivations of the Self, and not in the framework of the prosaic, practical lifeworld belonging to the objective spirit. The artistic and religious reflection on the world and the lifeworld belongs to the world of the absolute spirit. Here we pose our questions about happiness – as an imagined or real basic value of our life – from the (contemplated, imagined, cogitated) viewpoint of the absolute, in spite, or precisely because of our finitude. Under the (believed or cogitated) perspective of the absolute spirit, we ask the question, how we can interpret our *own* happiness and *own* freedom in the existential dimension of our human existence? The incommensurability and the insuperable distance between the absolute and *this* concrete individual, as well as their modes of approach, are all present in Hegel's search for meaning, which is expressed in the logical-metaphysical sense by the concepts of infinite and finite. To place ourselves in the perspective of the absolute spirit is not simply a sacrilege, but – as belief or

⁴¹ Hegel had worked out the logical formation of universality, particularity, and singularity years before the *Science of Logic*. Its first version is in Hegel's 1811 philosophical encyclopedia for the upper class of secondary schools. See *Nürnberg und Heidelberger Schriften*, 22, 24, 26, 29–32, 61.

thought – the search for *meaning-constitution in human life as individual existence, enclosed in the boundaries of Dasein*. The “higher in human” (das Höhe im Menschen) mediates and connects the seemingly incommensurable spheres and forms of subjectivity. The logical concepts of infinite and infinite are thus supplemented by a term from the philosophy of art (and religion), which seems marginal in a linear reading: the higher that is hidden in the human being. This proves again, that we are on the right track searching for the extra meaning of systemic dimensions.

In the line of dynamic components of the system of spirit, let me refer to one more constitutive element, that Hegel calls “point of view.” I now call it *perspective*. “Moral point of view” in the *Philosophy of Right* is a characteristic term of Hegelian perspective.⁴² It is worth a brief excursion to shed light on this extra meaning. There are different, interlinking perspectives in human individuality. In organic nature, the organism has a peculiar perspective that differs from the human, and aims at *self-preservation*.⁴³ The broad perspective of human existence, however, is marked in Hegel by the *conceptual constellation of thinking and freedom*. This constellation, in its architectonically-determined degrees *and* in all of its internal and external relations (the relations of the human being to nature, to God, to other people, to oneself, to the institutions, etc.), is further divided and acquires new forms of expression in the sphere of the spirit. But this specific human perspective does not eliminate the perspective of organic self-preservation. Although in human existence, self-preservation is subjected to thinking and freedom, thinking and freedom are impossible without self-preservation. Furthermore, self-preservation is not simply an organic constant: the forms of its realization are formed and transformed by culture and technology in history.⁴⁴ An example in Hegel is the tension between luxury and meeting needs for bare life preservation.

⁴² The expression “the three attitudes of thought to objectivity” has a similar meaning. Cf. SL, 146–209.

⁴³ On self-preservation as practical relation see N, 384–406 (§§ 359–365).

⁴⁴ In the philosophy of nature, Hegel starts the spiritual contextualization of natural shape with the term of ‘constructive instinct.’ N, 406 (§ 365) “Creative instinct” is treated in parallel with sexuality, as ‘artistic instinct,’ which is a ‘purposive action,’ and at the same time the ‘wisdom of nature.’ This is an obvious reference to Kant. Hegel also prepares here the introduction of his own concept of spirit. The concept of ‘particular individuality’ does not easily fit into the relations of ‘natural individuality’ and the genus. This is where Hegel leaves the sexual relations of the animal and starts discussing the sexual character of man and woman. N, 412–413 (§ 368).

In Hegel, the peculiar perspective of human life, in the conceptual constellation of thinking and freedom, is represented by supreme value-preference (I also state that Hegel has not pointed out a single value as the value-preference of modernity, but relations of values). By connecting this value-preference to the linear system, we obtain a perspective encompassing the whole world of the spirit, which differentiates itself from the perspective of logic as the science of pure idea, and the perspective of natural philosophy. However, for historical reasons, this perspective cannot be said to be final and absolute. Freedom as a historical principle and thinking (reason) as an anthropological constant unfold in various grades and formations, all filled with tension, both in history and in the lives of individual people. Along the lines of Hegelian value-preferences, the peculiar perspective of human life also includes the viewpoint of thinking and freedom as “conscious life” (Henrich).⁴⁵

The question remains open, whether at present we are ready to employ Hegel's theory of concept, as Höhle suggested. One of the problems that Hegel mentions is that “the tedious work of the concept” scares us off, and only a few will take up the task. A more serious question is whether we possess or want to possess the “conceptual form” suggested by Henrich, which attaches our self-understanding to the world and our relations with it, or Brandom's self-conception and self-constitution: a conceptuality which can be realized by the adequate reconstruction and interpretation of the constant change of both the phenomenal, structural, and conceptual complexity and the life of the modern human being, i.e. our own life, and a conceptuality which does not detach the individuals' self-interpretation and self-determination from the speculative way of thinking, because – as Henrich points out – this conceptuality is not the manifestation of a closed scientific worldview, but a form in which the conscious life of the persons can be interpreted.⁴⁶ One thing is beyond doubt: Hegel has left behind a model that is still relevant to our understanding of the above problematic.

⁴⁵ Dieter Henrich, *Bewusstes Leben*; and Dieter Henrich “Erkundung im Zugzwang: Ursprung, Leistung und Grenzen von Hegels Denken des Absoluten,” in *Das Interesse des Denkens: Hegel aus heutiger Sicht*, ed. Klaus Vieweg and Wolfgang Welsch (München: Fink, 2003), 28–32.

⁴⁶ Dieter Henrich, “Erkundung im Zugzwang,” 31.

PART B

LIFEWORLD, FORMS OF IDENTITY AND IDENTITY CRISES
IN MODERNITY

CHAPTER THREE

THE SYSTEMATIC CONCEPTUAL DETERMINATIONS OF MODERN INDIVIDUALITY

...subjectivity, in its comprehensive particularity, is itself the existence of freedom.¹

My particularity (...) is only a right at all in so far as I am *free*.²

To man's actual existence there belongs a surrounding world, just as the statues of a god have a temple.³

In what follows, I will concentrate on a few basic elements of the Hegelian concept of individuality, the lifeworld, the motivations of actions, and their connections, which Hegel explicates in the theory of individuality embedded in the topic of *modernity*, using the logical and spiritual concepts of *particularity* characteristic of his philosophy. The Hegelian concept of *particularity* serves primarily to shed light on the *peculiar, single, and individual existence of the human being in every sphere of the spirit*.⁴ In his practical philosophy, which fully grasps the spheres of spirit, he applies the concept of particularity to the individually shaped, imagined, and determined (*individual*), and at the same time socio-culturally and historically contextualized human (*universal*) existence. This conceptual formation is founded at a primary, abstract-universal level in the *Logic*, where Hegel outlines the categories of individual, particular, and universal, which he further specifies in spirit, namely in the doctrine of the concept, found in the *Science of Logic*, as a part of the *theory of subjectivity*.

This interpretation may seem surprising at first sight, but the first division of the third major part of the *Logic* refers to it: Hegel calls this unit subjectivity.⁵ This theory contains three parts: the doctrines of concept,

¹ R, 155 (§ 128).

² R, 153 (§ 126).

³ A I, 244.

⁴ We may refer here to Henrich's remark that contact with the contingent conditions and endowments of one's own life, and their transformation into what is essential for life always remains the task of life, and not just of theory. Dieter Henrich, *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2010), 219.

⁵ See *The Doctrine of the Concept*, Foreword and Section I, Chapter I. GL, 507–550.

judgment, and syllogism. Although this architectonic and terminology can be linked to Aristotelian logic, the introduction of subjectivity as a principle and a comprehensive concept gives a completely different perspective to traditional logic. The integration of individual, universal, and particular as conceptual components and conceptual relations expresses a post-Kantian turn.⁶ The three moments of the doctrine of concept: universality, particularity, individuality are formal-logical *and* contentual determinations of the theory of subjectivity. They are relevant and should be specified in the sciences of nature and spirit as well.⁷ The conceptual triad that was first introduced as a linear formation, can now presented in its relations and its complexity, i.e., as a dynamic conceptual structure, which is of crucial importance for the present discussion.

Particular, which holds an eminent position in my investigation, is remarkable in several respects: particular as a determination is a property of existence and quality. It is not a boundary, but an immanent moment of the universal, which is therefore also at home in the particular. Particular then contains the universal as its own substance. The same holds for other particulars, to which it stands in relation, which taken together form a whole, a *totality*. Still, particular does not only contain the universal, but also *displays it* through its own peculiar *determination*. The reference of the particular to the universal or another particular (which can also contain contraries) is the outward appearance of the universal.⁸

Individuality is the determination in relation to one's self.⁹ While the universal and the particular are constituted in their reference to each other, individuality appears in its reference to itself, although it does not

⁶ Hegel himself sees his logic as Kantian in origin, but post-Kantian in nature. Let us note that the "latent scientism" of Kant and Fichte (Stekeler-Weithofer, 16) offended not only early German romantics, but Hegel as well, as is clear from the critique of "intellect," or "formal" and "abstract" ways of thinking, which lack contentual determination. Reason in Hegel is intended to demonstrate and execute the philosophical renewal of not only logic, but science, and a way of thinking in general. Content here means that thinking makes an object its own, whereby the object goes through a change, and becomes an object of thought, having its content and truth in its concept. See GL, 521. On different interpretations of the *Science of Logic*, see Tommaso Pierini, *Theorie der Freiheit: Der Begriff des Zwecks in Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik* (München: Fink, 2006), 15–22.

⁷ For a reconstruction of the theory of concept as subjectivity see Klaus Düsing, *Das Problem der Subjektivität in Hegels Logik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1995).

⁸ GL, 534–539. This argumentation makes possible the conceptual analysis of phenomena, and their integration into the concept, although not in a purely logical-conceptual way. Cf. chapter A.I.1.

⁹ GL, 540.

isolate itself from the other two components. Hegel adds, we do not face three concepts here, but one concept, constituted by their references.¹⁰ Being one concept, in the case of the particular, means the following: “The *particular*, for the same reason that makes it only a determinate universal, is also a *singular*, and conversely, because the singular is a determinate universal, it is equally a particular. If we stay at this abstract determinateness, then the concept has the three particular determinations of universal, particular, and singular...”¹¹ This logical formation that has become one complex and articulated concept, necessarily leads to spirit, where it finds its true self.¹² Hegel warns already here that the contextualization of this logical triad in the medium of spirit and its formations is a challenge that is still ahead of us. The program to contextualize the logical formation in the medium of spirit also opens the way to the topic of subjectivity in practical philosophy.¹³

In the brief treatise of the Encyclopedia Logic (Smaller Logic), Hegel is not as committed to the contextualization of logical formations in spirit, and to the doctrine of concept as a theory of subjectivity, as in the so-called Greater Logic. Here, subjectivity is replaced with subjective concept as the counterpart of the objective concept in previous units.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the association of the individual with the actual as the entity of essence and existence and the connection of individuality with subjectivity indirectly refers to the context of spirit.¹⁵ The same is asserted by a remark in the appendix, which states that it took thousands of years for thinking to become conscious of universality.¹⁶ The human being as such has been recognized in his infinite worth with infinite rights in modern Europe. This happened in the very principle of individuality, which is universality.¹⁷ Hegel also refers here to the recognition of the principle of infinite subjective freedom, and the expansion of the individual's right of

¹⁰ GL, 541.

¹¹ GL, 547.

¹² GL, 545.

¹³ GL, 529–550. Pierini – avoiding the distinction of theoretical and practical philosophy – sees Hegel's reflection on the problem of indeterminacy as the root of the topic of freedom, the key concept of spirit. See Pierini, *Theorie der Freiheit* (2006), 18–19.

¹⁴ SL, 327 (§ 163).

¹⁵ SL, 328 (§ 163).

¹⁶ SL, 328 (§ 163).

¹⁷ “What the slave is without, is the recognition that he is a person: and the principle of personality is universality.” SL, 329 (§ 163).

self-determination to every human being, which is the result of the thousand years of work of the spirit.¹⁸

It is exactly in this twofold – conceptual (logical) and practical (spiritual) – philosophical perspective, that Hegel treats individuality, which he defines as the basic principle, value, and right of modernity. In addition, he presents a deep analysis of the contents, motivations, and practices touching the particular existence and actual lifeworld of the individuals. Particularity has a historical-cultural context as well, of which Hegel says in the *Philosophy of Right*, that in relation to the principle of particularity “a difference emerges between the political life of East and West, and of the ancient and modern worlds. In the latter, the division of the whole into estates came about objectively and of its own accord, because it is rational in itself; but the principle of subjective particularity was at the same time denied its rights”.¹⁹ In Eastern societies, this principle is a hostile element, causing the corruption of the social order. Taking up the principle of subjective particularity is a feature of European societies based on the modern principles of freedom and right.

Investigating important aspects of this ramifying issue, I reconstruct and interpret the problem of individuality not in a metaphysical or logical, but in a normative and practical sense.²⁰ The main text of my analysis is the third volume of the *Encyclopedia* (1830), *The Philosophy of the Spirit*: it is here that particular existence as the first and abstract individual life-

¹⁸ We do not discuss here the logical figure that is the background and foundation of particular existence, and only briefly reflect on life as organic being, albeit it is an important aspect of the Hegelian conception of life. – The significance of the idea of life at the intersection of the spiritual and the organic is investigated by Hans Friedrich Fulda, “Hegels Logik der Idee und ihre epistemologische Bedeutung,” in *Hegels Erbe*, 78–137. Hegel’s speculative figure (Grundfigur) plays a decisive role in Fulda’s argument, making it potentially inaccessible for current philosophical debates. In opposition, Halbig points out that Hegelian philosophy can offer an attractive alternative if we separate it from metaphysical presuppositions and choose the rehabilitation of *common sense* as a point of departure. See Christoph Halbig, “Das ‘Erkennen als solches’: Überlegungen zur Grundstruktur von Hegels Epistemologie,” in *Hegels Erbe*, 160. The connection between philosophy and simple life, ordinary consciousness, and conscious life is the general interpretive horizon of the present work.

¹⁹ R, 237–238 (§ 206).

²⁰ With regard to the normative dimension of practical sphere, Pinkard considers Hegel’s anti-Cartesian theory of subjectivity to be a sort of enlargement of the subject (*Vergrößerung des Subjekts*), taking into itself the whole of objectivity. He speaks of subjectivity in a normative, not in a metaphysical sense. See Terry Pinkard, “Innen, Außen und Lebensformen: Hegel und Wittgenstein,” in *Hegels Erbe*, 255. – Pinkard focuses on those differentiated relations between the subject and the object, which can be identified in the oscillating movements between subjects and institutionalized norms and practices, and constitute the basic structure of modernity. An important insight of Pinkard is that the succession of the shapes of spirit also expresses the succession of forms of life. *Ibid.*, 292.

world of the Self becomes systematically involved in the topic of the practical spirit. At the last degree of the subjective spirit, in the free spirit, we see the basic determination or essence of spirit emerge: freedom. In the free spirit, which is at the same time the meeting point of the subjective and the objective spirit, Hegel exposes singularity, its particular existence in the present and actual relations of the individual, as worldly existence associated with the feeling and willing of the present as an adequately objective disposition.²¹ It is in this context that the fundamental question of Kantian origin arises: how can the individual, whose actions are directly led by instincts, desires, passions, lending one's lifeworld a natural and at the same time subjective and arbitrary character, overcome the contingency of these motives, and the disposition resulting from them, the vacillating attitude, to find a firm base for one's behavior and actions? Although Hegel agrees with Kant's critique on many points, he suggests an alternative to Kant's answer to the question.

Hegel conceives of *freedom* as the *second motivation* of practical activity, giving a new direction to the whole problem. But what ideas is he led by? Freedom in relations to actuality and reason constitutes the *fundamental conceptual constellation* inside the spirit, on which Hegel's considerations are founded. By means of this conceptual constellation, the first, immediate, natural motivations of the individual (instincts, desires) are seen from a viewpoint, from which the *reality* of these motivations (the possibility of their practical realization), and their *legitimacy* (truth) can be assessed and reassessed, refuted or verified. The reference to actuality and the claim to legitimacy (*Rechtfertigung*) appearing in this viewpoint are both *normative and practical acts*, which affect not only the Hegelian interpretation of the motivational structure, but the interpretation of the basic character of practical philosophy as well. According to Hegel, this perspective is characterized by another mode of cognition, one that becomes manifest and explicates itself already in the "healthy" human intellect: the mode of cognition belonging to the simple conduct of the ingenuous soul.²² He does not therefore speak of something that is the privilege of philosophical

²¹ Free spirit means the volition of the idea and principle of freedom, *the realization claim and perspective* of its shapes explicated in the contexts of theoretical and practical spirit. It is not an elaborated theory, however, which is easily understood: Hegel refers to a change in perspective when he draws attention to the transition from subjective spirit to objective spirit. This change is not merely the movement of the linear structure, but the relation of the two spheres. This relation and change of perspective reveals one of the central components and texts of Hegelian practical philosophy. Cf. S, §§ 481 and 482.

²² R, 11 (Preface).

reason and conceptual thinking. And again, we do not find the relevant *locus* of my investigation in the linear system itself.

Determining the right locus and sphere of concepts for my purpose relies on the conception of modernity. The topic of modern individuality, and its proper basic element, particular existence can also appear in the perspective of the multiply structured dimensions of the system, from a practical philosophical viewpoint, given at the point of intersection of *normative* and *practical* aspects.²³ That is to say, in modernity *every single* individual can aspire to develop the ability of rational insight and rational attitude to actuality, making them the firm base of one's life.²⁴ This aspiration occurs faintly in the particular existence of the Self, due to its abstract reference to present and actuality; its fully-developed form will be manifest in the objective spirit, at the point of intersection of the family and civil society, as a lifeworld-complex: it can be realized and legitimized solely in this complex. The conceptual constellation beginning with the particular existence of the Self, and leading to the lifeworld of the concrete particular person expresses the fact that the life of the individual is not something merely given by tradition, but is a *lifeworld legitimized by the right of self-determination* (which derives from the subjective freedom of the modern individual), and actualized *by one's own practices*. The Hegelian distinction of the two groups of practical motivations is important in this relation as well. The actuality and truth of both immediate, natural motivations and motivations to freedom is detectable in the lifeworld and the whole spectrum of practices operating it.

Hegel investigates the *motivational structure* of activities in the medium of *subjective-practical spirit* of the *Encyclopedia*. The *Philosophy of Right* focuses on the structures of the *objective spirit*, the institutional framework and the dimensions of intersubjectivity, although subjective motivations (instincts, desires, passions) also play an important role (cf. the chapter

²³ Contemporary American and German discussions make an interesting contribution to the Hegelian conception of normative and practical dimensions. Important selections can be found in *Hegels Erbe* and *Das Interesse des Denkens*.

²⁴ The Preface of the *Philosophy of Right* treats rational insight in relation to the "architectonics of rationality." Every individual has rational insight, which has the task to provide a firm foundation and a fixed position in life. The individual, just like philosophy – although for different reasons – has to understand the differentiations of rational as existent from the "infinite wealth of forms, appearances, and shapes." R, 21 (Preface). Philosophy comprehends rational in its own proper way: as self-reflection and self-determination of the human being in present actuality (*vorhandene Wirklichkeit*). See R, 19–23 (Preface).

on The System of Needs).²⁵ This structural layout is based on conceptual considerations: unlike the particular existence of the Self given in the subjective spirit, the lifeworld of the individuals is found, (re)constructed, and interpreted in the objective spirit at the point of intersection of subjective and objective factors. The elements of subjective spirit become integrated in the structures of objective spirit, therefore their relations are of an internal nature.

At the points of contact between these elements and relations, we gain a broad interpretive horizon, on which the lifeworld is not conceived merely as natural, or as an isolated, arbitrary individual life, as in the particular existence in the framework of the subjective spirit, but as a socio-culturally and historically contextualized, mediated, and at the same time self-determined life.²⁶ Thanks to this broad and multiply articulated horizon, Hegel's practical philosophy continues to offer interesting inspiration for debates on the various questions of human life as individual existence. However, the questions of individuality in Hegel's practical philosophy refer back to the properties of individuality explored in his natural philosophy and his logic. This broad interpretive framework has significance for some of the crucial issues of contemporary debates on Hegel as well.

Recently, American philosophers have rediscovered Hegel's practical philosophy, including the Hegelian conception about the nature of practices and motivations.²⁷ It is sufficient to refer to the moment of the satisfaction of needs (*Befriedigung*) in the work of neopragmatists.²⁸

²⁵ Hegel highlights the central role played by the structures of subjectivity in the analysis of will in the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, and in the theory of action in morality. See Michael Quante, "Die 'Persönlichkeit des Willens' und das 'Ich als Dieser': Bemerkungen zum Individuationsproblem in Hegels Konzeption des Selbstbewusstseins," in *Vermittlung und Versöhnung. Die Aktualität von Hegels Denken für ein zusammenwachsendes Europa*, ed. Michael Quante and Erzsébet Rózsa (Münster: LIT, 2001), 53–67. Michael Quante, *Hegels Begriff der Handlung* (Stuttgart: Frohmann-Holzboog, 1993). – Michael Quante, *Die Wirklichkeit des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2011) 159–227.

²⁶ This contextualized character of Hegel's conception of individuality has been pointed out by Siep, from his interpretation of the Hegelian notion of recognition – Ludwig Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip der praktischen Philosophie* (Freiburg: Alber, 1979) – up to the present day: Ludwig Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels* (München: Fink, 2010).

²⁷ On the relevant aspects of the Hegel renaissance in American neo-pragmatism see Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 24, 38, 77–88, and *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 8–13, 34–8, 45–8, 56–8, 104–5, 121–7.

²⁸ Pinkard discusses satisfaction of needs in the tradition of the highest good. He comes to the conclusion that for Hegel, the highest good is not a union of morality and happiness, but the union of morality and satisfaction. See Terry Pinkard, "Tugend, Moral und Sittlichkeit: Von Maximen zu Praktiken," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 49 (2001)

Satisfaction is indeed a key concept in Hegel's practical philosophy and his theory of individuality. Let me add that the meaning of satisfaction has two layers in Hegel: 1. satisfying concrete needs of concrete persons, which Hegel treats systematically in the chapter on civil society; and 2. the right of individuals to find satisfaction. In this context, Hegel speaks of the subjective value of action, and the subjective satisfaction of the individual itself.²⁹ This is the great topic of the chapter on morality: Hegel introduces normativity into the practices both in regard to satisfaction, and in regard to motivations. Thus, the good life for Hegel is inconceivable without the topic of morality, and cannot be founded solely on ethical life.³⁰ Hegel founds the normativity of the structure of practices in morality. He does not simply construct practices from maxims, but forges a way where maxims are integrated: normativity and practice together characterize all forms of human activity. We should not forget that satisfaction is only one element of the conceptual sphere that Hegel uses to set forth the topic of motivations, practices, and their relations and contexts.³¹ Beside the previously mentioned *universal* and practical constellation of concepts (*freedom, reason*), *particularity* is the comprehensive, logically and systematically founded category, by which the problem of *satisfaction*, as well as the *realization* and *legitimization* of claims corresponding to it, can be explained. Hegel's complex method with regard to satisfaction is clearly visible in the chapter on civil society. The extra significance offered by the Hegelian theory of the concept is advantageous on this

57–77. I see the Hegelian transformation of the highest good as a fundamental change that places the above entities in a new kind of relation. The Hegelian relations of happiness and freedom affect the Hegelian conception of the good: welfare becomes a basic value in modernity, thus modifying the good at a very basic level. Satisfaction is only one element of the complex interconnections in a theory of action and theory of the individual.

²⁹ R, §§ 122 and 124.

³⁰ This meta-level of morality is expressed in the discussion of various rights (right of knowledge, right to satisfaction, right of welfare, etc.). Hegel speaks of the development of the "right of subjective will" as the comprehensive right of subjectivity. (R, § 107) The "right of moral will" is a specific right of moral subjectivity (R, § 114). Only substantiality has "absolute right" (R, § 130). However, the above rights of the individuals become relative in modernity: the relativization of substantial normativity – the transformation of the good into welfare – becomes a basic feature of modern existence. The "subjective value" of practices expresses this tendency (R, § 122).

³¹ As Pippin points out, Hegel cannot accept the supposition that the actual origin of motivations is always some sort of desire (*Wunsch*). See Robert Pippin, "Hegels praktischer Realismus," in *Hegels Erbe*, 296.

question as well.³² However, this extra significance would not be complete if we did not refer at least briefly to the characteristics of the instincts and their satisfaction treated in natural philosophy, in connection with individuation, for Hegel grasped human individuality in structural continuation with the individuality of the living being.³³

1. FORMS OF INDIVIDUALITY IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY: INCOMPLETE EXISTENCE AS THE FOUNDATION OF DESIRE AND SATISFACTION

Only what is living feels a *lack* [...] But it is a *lack* only in so far as the lack's overcoming is equally present in the same thing, and contradiction is, as such, immanent and explicitly present in that thing. A being which is capable of containing and enduring its own contradiction is a *subject*; this constitutes its infinitude.³⁴

Hegel introduces the concept of *life* referring to *singularity* in the *Encyclopedia Logic*. The "privilege" of the living being in contrast to inanimate objects is *pain*. This is what gives desire its inner connection to the living form of existence: *incomplete existence* is, by the "feeling of negation," "*individual*," and at the same time, the "*universality of its feeling of life*." This contradiction is in "one subject": as the universality of the feeling of life, pain, incomplete existence, as opposed to individuality, which feels the incompleteness of life and aims at eliminating it.³⁵ Therefore, the ultimate basis of desires and their satisfaction is to be found in the essence and character of the living form of existence. If this individuality is a self, a thinking personality, i.e., a universal and not merely an "empirical self," it is called "particular personality,"³⁶ human individuality. Although this form of the self is on a higher level of existence, pain and incomplete existence lingers on, what is more, it is doubled through self-reflection. Incomplete existence, however, is not the existential base of the "pure,"

³² See chapter A.II. – Particularity can help to clear misinterpretations of Hegel's theory of individuality. Let us recall such outstanding Hegel scholars as Manfred Frank and Axel Honneth: both of them refer to certain unsatisfactory elements in Hegel's theory of individuality. Hegel's point, however, is much more complex, and that is what I am trying to prove here.

³³ See also Dieter Henrich, "Erkundung im Zugzwang," 31.

³⁴ N, 385 (§ 359).

³⁵ SL, 189 (§ 60).

³⁶ Hegel remarks this in his polemic against Jacobi. SL, 194 (§ 63).

“in itself universal,” thinking self: the self enters the practical context of the spirit as human individuality, making it “concrete living spirit.”³⁷ *Pain* thus transforms into the medium of the spirit, where it becomes a component of the essence of spirit, *freedom* (the theoretical, self-reflective, and practical, self-determining disposition of the thinking subject).³⁸ This transformation doubles the incomplete existential base: in addition to natural incompleteness, spiritual, social, and cultural incompleteness will also be a basic feature of individual existence. This double foundation offers a closer explanatory principle for questions concerning the nature of desires and their satisfaction.

This multi-level articulation of life is summed up in the Hegelian principle of the *unity of body and soul* that Hegel also introduces in the above passage of the Logic. According to the definition given by § 216, life is “the concept realized in a body as soul”³⁹ “The concept of life is the soul, and the concept has the body for its reality.” – as the Appendix reads. *The realization of the soul in a body is the form of individuation*. The form in which natural as internal, i.e., the soul as natural soul, and natural as external unite. This singularity, conceived as the unity of internal and external, in which *spirit starts to find its home*, is no longer a material vehicle of incomplete life. This individual body (*Leib*) is no mere natural body (*Körper*), but an internal-cultural vehicle of desires and their satisfaction. The attachment of desires to the *individual unity* of body and soul is a further important contribution to the topic of desire and its satisfaction; as well as to the Hegelian understanding of the individual character of human existence in general. This specification of life in the body-soul relation leads us to an essential feature of the human mode of life. This *mode of life is based on a double motion*: on the one hand, in order to terminate incomplete existence, we receive the existing world “in ourselves, in our subjective imagination and thinking,” thus filling our incomplete and empty existence with a content taken as adequate, “objectivity taken as true.” On the other hand, we “determine” the objective world, taken as a “collection of void shapes” by the “inwardness of the subjective,” and build it into the subjective. The first motion is led by the “*desire to know*,” the theoretical activity of cognition, of the idea. The second is driven by the “*desire of the good*” for realization (*satisfaction*), which comprehends

³⁷ SL, 205 (§ 74).

³⁸ Cf. S, § 4.

³⁹ SL, 380 (§ 216).

the whole spectrum of volition, of practical action.⁴⁰ *That is how incomplete existence determines the theoretical and practical relations of not only human existence in general, but individual existence as well.*

Hegel investigates further the course and forms of individuation in natural philosophy. After mechanics as “unity sought,” he sets forth “*natural individuality*” in physics, which is, by its form and existence, the *particular* determination of actuality. In organics, the particularities and determinations of form are traced back to the ideal unity.⁴¹ Physical material has “*individuality*,” as the determination of the particular described here has already indicated. Its further determination is *in itself*: it frees itself from the determination of gravity.⁴² According to the *contents of physics*, individuality has three levels and forms: 1. *universal individuality*, immediate, free physical qualities, 2. *particular individuality*, the reference of form as a physical determination to gravity, 3. *total free individuality*.⁴³ Free individuality is the completely freely determining material, where externality is subjected to it.⁴⁴ This third form of individuality raises the question of *life* again.

In this context, life appears in the differentiation of individual bodies. “The complex of the properties, the particular body, is not truly independent, the entire corporality therefore enters into tension, into a process which is at the same time the becoming of the individual body.”⁴⁵ The becoming of the *individual body* is attached to life: the coming to being of the body as organism is an important step in the explication of life (“the idea’s coming to immediate existence”) in regard to incomplete existence as well. The individual shapes of life are “particular, formal subjectivity” in the case of the vegetable organism, and “individual, concrete subjectivity” in the case of the animal organism.⁴⁶ The vegetal organism itself possesses subjectivity: the “organic being exists as a singular.”⁴⁷ However, this is the level of immediate vitality and singularity. The difference of its parts – and thus singularity too – is superficial: one can easily assume the function of the other. This is a feature that in the case of human individuality can only occur in extreme situations (e.g. the

⁴⁰ SL, 384 (§ 225).

⁴¹ N, 25 (§ 252).

⁴² N, 85 (§ 272).

⁴³ N, 85 (§ 273).

⁴⁴ N, 156–157 (§ 307).

⁴⁵ N, 232 (§ 325).

⁴⁶ N, 273 (§ 337).

⁴⁷ N, 303 (§ 343).

mechanization of work). The subjectivity of the animal organism means that its outward shape “is idealized into *members*.”⁴⁸ Its purpose is not in itself: it is the base and component of the *self-preservation and self-identity* of the organism.

The *feeling of lack and the urge to get rid of it* develops in the *practical relation* of the living shapes to inorganic nature,⁴⁹ in the duality of the negative relation to the external world and the positive relation to itself. Irritation from outside is a condition to which the subject reacts negatively, and as an object: it overcomes want in an objective relation – the satisfaction of a desire – and thus eliminates desire.

Hegel conceived of the question of human life as individual form embedded in the richness of living natural shapes. Or, as Henrich puts it: Hegel viewed the singularity of the person in structural continuity with the singularity of the organism.⁵⁰ This helps to elucidate the crucial remark, “Only what is living feels a *lack* [...] But it is a *lack* only in so far as the lack’s overcoming is equally present in the same thing, and contradiction is, as such, immanent and explicitly present in that thing. A being which is capable of containing and enduring its own contradiction is a *subject*; this constitutes its infinitude.”⁵¹ As shapes of individuality belonging to the richness of living natural forms react to their existential base, specific, new forms of reaction evolve. Self-reflection implies incomplete existence here. A property of the individual human mode of life is a second, spiritual foundation as well. As a result, there is recognition of the basic contradiction of existence, and having a new relation – or even manifold relations – to it. The “endurance” of incomplete life, as a new sort of relation to which Hegel refers, can mean among other things the delay of the elimination of want, the suspension of the satisfaction of desire, or a compensational satisfaction of desire (e.g. luxury consumption), etc. This specific feature is of basic importance: reflexive pain as the *apprehension* of incomplete life is also the *articulation of desire*, and at the same time, a component of the essence of the human mode of existence, i.e. *self-determining, free existence*. This specific feature reveals one of the basic characteristics of the properly individual human mode of existence.

⁴⁸ N, 351 (§ 359).

⁴⁹ N, 384–385 (§ 359).

⁵⁰ Dieter Henrich, *Erkundung im Zugzwang*, 31.

⁵¹ N, 385 (§ 359).

2. FROM INSTINCTS THROUGH HAPPINESS TO FREEDOM.
 TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE NATURAL AND SUBJECTIVE MOTIVATIONS
 MEDIATED BY REASON AND ETHICAL-NORMATIVE CONTENTS

Individuality “gives or does not give itself (as it pleases) an aim in happiness [...], in the intrinsic *universality* of the will, i.e. its very autonomy or *freedom*.”⁵²

After nature, Hegel treats the question of individuality through several relations in the framework of the spirit. First he investigates *practical emotion*, which is the comprehensive concept for the first, immediate motivations still inward in nature. Emotion is the form of the immediate, proper individuality of the subject.⁵³ The particular subjectivity of motivations, instincts, desires appearing in practical emotions is expressed first as pain, subjectivity, and arbitrariness. In this sphere, we find not only isolated, single, immediate motivations, but also ideas, as the ideas of God, law, or ethical life can be also felt. However, these ideas do not yet pass over to the limited world of the individual, and its immediate particularity. *Immediate particularity* as a present, given form can only transcend its own boundaries, if it recognizes *one reason* in emotion, will, and thinking. Alongside this rational process, reason means something else: it serves as a final *foundation*, *explanatory* principle, and point of *orientation* for every motivation and activity. Reason is not only epistemic, but it has a *general practical* connotation, too. Reason has the ability to penetrate motivations and practices, explicating and connecting them in the epistemic media of emotion, intellect, and thinking, and in the practical medium of volition.⁵⁴ To the practical ability of reason, a socio-cultural meaning is added in the objective spirit, by *contextualizing* subjective motivations and practices (which are initially abstract, joined with subjective goals) in the worlds constituting the sphere of the objective spirit: law, family, civil society, etc. In the process of the transformations taking place in the medium of reason *the individual finds tensions between is and ought*, which will later become the final incentive for motivations and practices. One feels, knows, and experiences this contradiction in one’s socio-cultural medium – lifeworld, private life, profession, etc. This experience is expressed in the fact that

⁵² S, § 480.

⁵³ S, § 471.

⁵⁴ Unfortunately, the outstanding Hegel scholar Horstmann and his co-author take no notice of this meaning of reason, and its possible inspiration for practical philosophy. See Emundts – Horstmann, *G.W. F. Hegel: Eine Einführung*, 32–37, 66–68.

the individual is *dissatisfied* with everything one finds in the immediate, given world as the medium of one's activities. This experience takes form as misery, pain, trouble, which is a clear warning for the individual that there is no harmony between is and ought. From this immediate experience one draws a far-reaching conclusion: *the negativity of the spirit as such*. Possessing this negative experience, the individual who is dissatisfied with the world faces subjectivity as the opposite of the existing world, which Hegel describes as the relation of the Self and freedom. This, however, is no philosophical question for the Self, who is not a philosopher. What is more, s/he is still very far from becoming a citizen. The Self is a subject of such individual experiences, which are attainable by anyone in the course of one's life, in the initial phases of becoming conscious and self-conscious.

With this immanent distinction, already present as it is in life and to an even greater extent in spirit, there enters an *ought to be*, negativity, subjectivity, ego, freedom, constituting the principles of evil and pain.⁵⁵

This *dissatisfaction* derives from the experience of the opposition between is and ought, and is expressed first in emotion. (There are no concepts at this level, which are necessary for the language of philosophy.) If, however, individuals are capable of transgressing this epistemic level linked to emotional reactions, and apply higher forms of reflection, such as the forms of rational insight or substantial feeling, as well as rational practical disposition, they leave the first, immediate form of their existence, and the dissatisfying experience thereof, for a higher level, another mode of life. *They place themselves and their lives in a higher dimension and form of existence*. This higher mode of existence is made possible first in the medium of particular, worldly existence. The essence of this turn is revealed by the *deeper meaning of self-determination*. Self-determination is the feature, which is not to be interpreted solely in the anthropological dimension of human existence, but also in a historical and socio-cultural context. It brings closer to the individual, everyone and anyone, the meaning of subjective freedom, as the basic principle and basic idea of modernity, thus making possible to join the latter to the above negative experience. In the existence joined with freedom as self-determination, which begins in particular and actual existence,⁵⁶ a dynamic process begins that expli-

⁵⁵ S, § 472.

⁵⁶ The concept of "worldly existence" is introduced in the relations of the substantial and the subjective, at the intersection of free spirit and objective spirit. Hegel also adds

cates the higher levels and formations of individual life. This change, as we have seen, is in close connection with *rationality as a universal human disposition; with freedom, as a historical achievement (the idea, principle, and right of modernity); the individual's right to self-determination resulting from it; and the autonomy of their lifeworld, based on the former. All these together constitute the foundation and the general interpretive framework of modern individuals' various concrete motivations, goals, and practices.* It is in this complex, relational structure that the distinction of the starting points and real possibilities of particularity of will – as an immediate feature of motivation and action – and of particular, worldly existence – as the rationally shapeable, i.e. mediated, concrete-particular lifeworld – can be identified and explained, without calling into question the sense of the first, immediate particularity. The distinction of these two types of the individual, particular mode of existence (one's motivations, goals, activities) is an important topic in Hegel's work appearing at the intersection of practical spirit and free spirit, and a great speculative gain.

By distinguishing the first, immediate, and the second, mediated particularity, and their corresponding motivations, activities and lifeworlds, we witness *the positive effects of the initially destructive negativity*, and the need to harmonize is and ought in the life of individuals now shows itself as real. This is one of the essential problems of modernity, which results from the fact, that the correspondence of is and ought depends mainly on the self-determination of the willing individual: this is the basic characteristic of modern subjective freedom.⁵⁷ It is obvious, that *freedom* in this relation is not conceived as a historical achievement but as *a normative basis of the individuals' own decisions about motivations and practices.* Hegel attached the concept of will to the motivation and principle of freedom, which leads on to the world of objective spirit.

Will as a comprehensive concept of the motivations and activities of the subjects (individuals and communities) *express freedom in an internal relation with individual existence.* This individual, possessing the right of self-determination, and thus being free, is capable of positing the correspondence of one internal determination (motivations and goals) and one existence (practices and lifeworld). The activity of this individual is aimed at establishing a correspondence between one's particular existence (first

that "by their existence the moral temper comes to be indwelling in the individual, so that in this sphere of particular existence, of present sensation and volition, he is *actually* free." S, § 482.

⁵⁷ S, § 473.

level at the level of one's lifeworld) and one's internal determinations (one's own motivational medium).⁵⁸ *The foundation of this correspondence is in the inside, in self-determination*, which is initially opposed by existence, but this existence is open to change. In the case of the modern individual, the right of *self-determination* is ab ovo in the inside, where it is attached to the claim to realization. Its internal contents, motivations, goals, etc. *must be realized* in actuality, which takes place by the mediation of practices and activities. Existence – the immediate, particular existence of the Self – is open to being shaped, and does not show mere resistance, as the individual had earlier experienced and thought.

In will, the subject of which is the willing Self, the initial *contents* of motivations and actions are natural determinations, instincts, desires, and passions.⁵⁹ However, in the transformational process of the subjective spirit leading into the objective spirit, i.e. in the course of contextualization, the natural immediacy, contingency, and subjectivity of this initial content becomes surmountable. Spirit becomes *objective*, and the content of self-determination loses its contingency and arbitrariness resulting from the natural: it finds in itself its own foundation, that it gives itself.⁶⁰ This transformation is made possible by the *rationality* of spirit's activities, which is in the present case a sort of *objectivation* of self-determination, and takes place on the grounds of objective relations whose contents are rights and duties in *ethical life*, and its spiritual context. Therefore, the transformational process of freedom, as self-determination by rationality cannot be reduced to subjective-practical forms (the rational insight of single individuals). All this cannot be recognized inside the subjective spirit, but only in the *internal relation of the subjective-practical spirit and the objective-practical spirit*: the higher significance and function of rationality is found in this relation. *Each element of the rational content (knowledge as rational insight, motivation as rational goal, practical habitual attitude as a rational standpoint to actuality)* which we attain as willing Selves meeting in the ethical sphere, the present actuality of the objective spirit, is indispensable for the transformation we aim at, i.e., *harmonizing is and ought in our own lives*. However, the inclusion of these ethical contents cannot eliminate the first, natural motivations. Rather, it is a multi-level, articulated process in which the original motivations are reserved, too. They are built into the sphere of rational insights and practical dispositions.

⁵⁸ S, § 475.

⁵⁹ Cf. S, §§ 473–478.

⁶⁰ S, § 474.

The presumed extra meaning does not prove to be illusory in this case, either. The result of our analysis shows that along the *multiple connections* between the elements of subjective and objective spirit (which connections are created and operated by the comprehensive concept of *will*) develops the broad spectrum of the spheres of the *practical*, which can be reconstructed from Hegel's philosophy of the spirit. The general form of the subject is also generated this way, containing in itself every form of subjectivity from the abstract Self through the willing Self to the honest citizen. The general form of subjectivity appearing this way is nothing else than *practical individuality*, and its historically limited, but at present eminently important type: *modern individuality*. It has also been confirmed, that beside these extra meanings, the *relevant passages* of the investigated topic is always determined by the operation of systemic dimensions, namely, in the relations of the relevant levels of the spirit.

As we have seen, the motivational medium of the individual becomes radically rearranged in its reference to the ethical world, without however the disappearance of immediate, natural motivations. It would be unnecessary, or even harmful. Hegel emphasizes the positive side to this: "But impulse and passion are the very life-blood of all action: they are needed if the agent is really to be in his aim and the execution thereof."⁶¹ In other words: the particularity of the instincts and their varied contents is an ineliminable structural element of human activities, their basic function being to ensure the vitality of individual existence. Our instincts and passions lend vitality to our activities and practices, and thus get built into our goals and their realization. Realization therefore cannot be understood simply as the satisfaction of concrete-particular instincts and needs, but is always attached to the maintenance of life as such. Thus, *beyond practicality*, a *general normative* content is added to the instincts and their satisfaction.⁶²

Originally, the instincts manifest the arbitrariness of the subject, which would be a negative symptom in itself. Hegel calls the realization of instincts and passions – as arbitrary, subjective contents – the *Process of dispersion* (Prozess der Zerstreuung). This negative force becomes a

⁶¹ S, § 475.

⁶² The universal-normative contents of modernity have both substantial *and* subjective character. This is clearly indicated by the idea of the good placed in the center of Hegel's theory of subjectivity, and the normative world discussed here, which manifests itself in the rights belonging to modern subject as such, and the "subjective value" of actions (all actions). It seems that contemporary Hegel scholarship is not always sensitive to this complementary aspect of the Hegelian conception of normativity, constituted of both substantial and subjective structures.

characteristic social phenomenon in modernity, which Hegel thoroughly investigates in the chapter on the system of needs in civil society.⁶³ However, instincts lose their immediacy and arbitrariness in reflective will as a both theoretical and practical, aim-determining and aim-realizing behavior, when the individual posits the instincts as one's own, and lends them actuality in their *own* action. Thus we attain the standpoint where the subject can *choose* from various inclinations, which, in the subjective spirit lacking the normativity of ethical contents, is only *arbitrary choice*, and not actual freedom or real self-determination.⁶⁴ The general normative content as maintenance of life as such is not yet closely connected to the (decisive) options deriving from the right of self-determination in the world of instincts. Single instincts, although based on the individual's own decisions, are marked here by signs of arbitrariness.

This motion of the instincts takes place in the medium of reflective will and under its control, which is a general form of self-determination both conceptually and empirically, regarding the single individuals. Reflective will and thinking establish the representation of general satisfaction which is *happiness* (Glückseligkeit). At the same time, the "*representation of general satisfaction*" affirming particular satisfactions⁶⁵ is separated from instincts: after all, we do not deem to find happiness in the latter.⁶⁶ Single instincts are also separated from each other: we sacrifice certain instincts, which leads to confusion, a sort of chaos. Although happiness, as the rep-

⁶³ The system of needs operates as a "system of ethical life lost in its extremes." Particularity as the satisfaction of needs "destroys itself and its substantial concept in the act of enjoyment." At the same time, as "infinitely agitated and continually dependent on external contingency and arbitrariness," satisfaction of needs is "itself contingent. In these opposites and their complexity, civil society affords a spectacle of extravagance and misery as well as of the physical and ethical corruption common to both." R, 222 (§ 185).

⁶⁴ S, § 477.

⁶⁵ S, § 479.

⁶⁶ Let us refer to Pinkard again, who thinks that satisfaction and happiness are interchangeable in Hegel. See Terry Pinkard, *Tugend, Moral und Sittlichkeit*, 57–77. – Welfare superseding the good actually suggests such an interpretation. However, the dual structure of happiness-motivation and freedom-motivation is present not only in the world of subjective spirit, but the objective spirit as well, including the system of needs. The question of subjective freedom is at stake in every relation: that of morality and ethical life, or that of instincts, needs and their satisfaction, and that of the good and welfare. Satisfaction, like happiness, is to be understood according to the perspective of subjective freedom, and can be reconstructed as a component of complementary relations – like the phenomenon of freedom. This is not a "platonizing conceptuality" of which Brandom warns us, but fulfillment of the "requirement of a theory of concept" (Hösle), which promises an extra meaning exactly through the exploration of the conceptual constellations of the topic – in comparison to the above meaning of conceptuality. Cf. chapter A.II.1.

resentation of general satisfaction, may be separated from instincts, it is at the same time also connected to them. Happiness is not something completely new with regard to instincts and natural motivations. Rather, it is rather a novel viewpoint, or – to quote Hegel – a standpoint of reflection. Reflective thinking starts to rearrange the first, immediate sphere of motivations *here and now*. This expresses the fact that the transition from the world of instincts to the world of freedom is not an immediate one, and it is not freedom, that immediately leads from natural motivations to the higher sphere of the spirit, but happiness. Happiness is a kind of intermediary state between our practices and lifeworlds motivated by instincts, desires, and passions, and our plans, actions, and worlds directed by the idea of freedom. However, *neither instincts nor the world of freedom is a territory of happiness*. Only the joining of the two in reflective thinking offers a narrow path for the representation of happiness and its realization.⁶⁷

Surpassing the natural and subjective-arbitrary character of motivations starts with the individual *changing his or her own former disposition*: s/he no longer wants only a particular satisfaction, but wants to cogitate about it. The individual refers the instinct in question to others, and separates it from them in the representation of the universal. In this representation of the universal, to which also the representation of the practical attitude of satisfaction belongs, referring to the whole also plays a role, which is nothing else, than rational insight. Thus, in the spheres of reflective thinking and will, we meet representations of which all rational beings are capable. Every reasoning human being is able to reflect on a given, accepted, willed motivational field, sort or rearrange various instincts, make preferences, etc.⁶⁸ *Choice has the meaning of reflective behavior*, and as a result, even certain instincts can fall victim. In spite of the appearance of a preliminary form of rationality however, these acts have an *arbitrary* character. Nevertheless, the individual, by the general claim to happiness, wants to surpass what is arbitrary, subjective, and disturbs his claim to happiness, that holds on to something more universal and secure. It is not easy to achieve, since the aimed at and desired happiness cannot be devoid of instincts: they lend him the content that Hegel calls affirmative. The affirmative content of instincts cannot be eliminated from happiness,

⁶⁷ See Rózsa, "Von der Glückseligkeit zur Freiheit," 280–286.

⁶⁸ On the instinct of reason, see the *Konzept der Rede beim Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlin*, 414.

i.e., the representation of general satisfaction, which means for the practices a novel, general motivation and a comprehensive, complex system of goals, as opposed to the goals generated by single isolated instincts. Hegel expresses this as follows:

Their mutual limitation (*that of the instincts – RE*), on the one hand, proceeds from a mixture of qualitative and quantitative considerations: on the other hand, as happiness has its sole *affirmative* contents in the springs of action, it is on them that the decision turns, and it is the subjective feeling and good pleasure which must have the casting vote as to where happiness is to be placed.⁶⁹

In the act of limitation, i.e. the separation of individual instincts on the basis of the representation of happiness, is a rearrangement that changes the former status of instincts. The phrase “mixture of qualitative and quantitative considerations” refers to this rearrangement. In consequence, we can choose happiness as our goal, or not;⁷⁰ we can even sacrifice certain instincts, if we imagine that our happiness, as our general representation, requires so.⁷¹ However, the representation of happiness is not on the top of the motivational structure, since it is limited; an imagined, abstract universality of the content.⁷² The *representation of happiness is deceptive*: there is no guarantee or certainty that we judge individual instincts rightly, relying on our representation of, and claim to, happiness. Due to this *uncertainty*, the individual does and does not give himself or herself a goal in happiness.⁷³ The primary reason for this is that, after all, it depends on subjective feeling and taste, where the individual finds happiness. Thus, *instability* is an unremovable structural element of happiness.

The subjective, unstable, contingent character of happiness is confirmed through several aspects. The basic problem is that the subjective feeling of the willing self decides where s/he finds happiness. In the reflective process, which is a property of one's representation of happiness, it becomes obvious that the subject has deemed to find happiness in the instincts, no matter how hard s/he tried to rearrange and reshape them. Although self-determination and freedom show themselves in the reflective acts of the willing self, it is only as reflective forms of thinking will and *not as contents*. What is it that could lead us out of this deficient state, the

⁶⁹ S, § 479.

⁷⁰ S, § 480.

⁷¹ S, § 479.

⁷² S, § 480.

⁷³ S, § 480.

multiply limited motivation of happiness? In Hegel's view, it is freedom. But what is the status of freedom *here and now*? Freedom is the truth of particular determination, which will be introduced only at the first degree of the free spirit. In other words, freedom does not precede happiness, but comes *after* it. Therefore, *freedom cannot be among the representations of happiness*. Individuals want to transcend mere single instincts in their motivations when developing and operating their representation of happiness as universal. However, *the affirmative content of happiness ties them to the instincts all the same*: content is only in the instincts, as Hegel says.⁷⁴

Introducing freedom as the other, second basic motivation is a further attempt to surpass instinct-motivations. In this, we want to surpass not only instincts, but also the representation of happiness that integrates them. Freedom is the structural element that tops subjective spirit: not only a representation of the universal, but something in which the individual *thinks and knows*, as well as *wants* himself or herself to be free. This is the motion of will, that is purified to be the determination of freedom.⁷⁵ The price to pay for the transition to the sphere of freedom, where the formalism, contingency, and limited nature of the former practical content has ceased is surpassing and giving up the representation of happiness.⁷⁶ The price of freedom and stability seems to be sacrificing happiness. The question arises: is it possible that Hegel does not offer in this respect a real alternative to Kant? For the moment, I leave the question open.

My concern here is the *singularity of freedom*, not its historical character, or freedom as an idea, similarly, as in the case of happiness-motivation. However, the singularity of freedom is not only an immediate singularity, as in the case of the instincts, but immediate singularity posited by itself which also purified to be a universal determination, the determination of freedom itself.⁷⁷ The double structure of the immediate, natural singular and the universal representation, which is the basic structure of happiness, is brought to an end in freedom: *the individual now knows and wants him or herself to be free, and self-determination is the key to both his or her singularity and universality*. The existential base of the free individual is in him or herself. Systematically speaking, the *self-determination and self-interpretation* that occurs in the singularity of freedom in the free spirit

⁷⁴ S, § 479.

⁷⁵ S, § 481.

⁷⁶ S, § 481.

⁷⁷ S, § 481.

appears as the *higher foundation and mode* of the individual's existence. To shed more light on the singularity of freedom, as self-determination and self-interpretation, I have to make a little excursion.

This step is purification which is not to be understood here in regard of philosophical conceptuality, but as laying down a *basic anthropological principle*: the conceptuality of philosophy is insufficient to elucidate what we are presently investigating. In Hegel's view, the point in discussion here is in tight connection with the essential in human beings. The *epistemic forms belonging to world-understanding and self-interpretation* belong immediately to the theoretical spirit, namely in the objective cognitive elements thereof (intuition, representation, thought). They are also necessary in the practical spirit, e.g., to throw light on the nature of motivations, or as elements belonging to activities. The first form of practical spirit, *practical emotion* is not only a subjective form of existence, but a subjective epistemic level as well: this also highlights the importance of primarily non-rational cognitive structures in the medium of the practical as such.

In practical emotion, we do not only reflect on the variety of the subject's motivations – instincts, desires, passions – but we also make it clear, that what we face here is a *specific mode of cognition and existence*, to which feeling, faith, conscience, etc. belong as well.⁷⁸ The motivations and their satisfaction fill us with pleasure, joy, pain, sorrow, contentment, thus not only the motivations and satisfaction are present in them, but also the practical feelings reflecting them in their variety. The *individual, subjective cognitive* forms linked to the medium of practical feeling signify something other than objective thought: they maintain a distance from both this sphere of the practical, and the cognitive forms of the mind, thought included. It is no accident that these cognitive forms do not belong to the main stream of the articulation of the spirit, and are not parts of the theoretical spirit (Intelligenz) in Hegel. They are present, however, even

⁷⁸ Brandom regards desire (Wunsch) as one of the most important practical motivations. He uses it to demonstrate the essence of self-determinations as self-constitution. He does not dwell on other motivations which, according to Hegel, unite in happiness as the basic human motivation. His primary intention is to describe the basic features of practical attitude. In animals, he identifies this basic feature with erotic consciousness, in humans, with recognition deriving from desire. His interpretation is based on the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. (See Robert Brandom, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution*, 56–61) – We might add, that in the *Philosophy of the Spirit* and the *Philosophy of Right*, we find a modified conception. Here, erotic consciousness as a sort of happiness-motivation, stands in a complementary relation with freedom as a properly human feature. Freedom permeates and rearranges erotic consciousness as well, without however calling into question its right to satisfaction.

if in a marginal position. This does not mean they are unimportant. On the contrary: they seem to be unavoidable elements in the reconstruction of the Hegelian conception of modern individuality. Their secondary conceptuality and/or metaphorical character is not merely a shortcoming; rather it is a constitutive element of extra significance. That is to say, insight, conscience, feeling, or faith are specific epistemic forms that serve the purpose of *personal* elucidation and interpretation, confirming or refuting the motivations and incitements of subjects, *anyone and everyone*. However, it does not happen from the intellectual viewpoint of thought, and not only from the universal-abstract, normative aspect of the comprehensive category of the practical sphere, i.e. will (what is the good as such), but with *the mediation of individual-subjective forms concretizing the structures and operations of the will and the mind*. In feeling and conscience, we pose the question from the viewpoint of the *particular self*: what is the *good for me*? This difference is pointed out by Hegel as follows: "The rational, which exists in the shape of rationality when it is apprehended by thought, is the same content as the good practical feeling has, but presented in its universality and necessity, in its objectivity and truth."⁷⁹ Thus, in the mentioned forms of practical emotion we face particular, individual-subjective forms that supplement, enrich, and elucidate the universal and comprehensive perspectives of the mind and the will; these forms, although marginal according to the linear structure, are not at all marginal from the viewpoint of the topic of individuality. The conceptional importance of practical emotion is shown by the fact, that Hegel himself links the former to the structures of both the mind and the will, the conceptual constellation of which rules this part of the subjective spirit.

Behind the articulated structure and the dynamics of the sphere of the practical we find another viewpoint of basic importance, which gives a new perspective for our investigations in the topic of individuality. Enriched with this new viewpoint, now let us return to the question of freedom exposed above. Will does not only aim at realizing immediate motivations, plans, or goals; beyond instincts, desires, passions, behind the scenes, so to speak, emerges *freedom as the essence of the spirit* albeit initially in an unintentional and not immediately perceptible way. In this process, which is comprehended by the concept of the will, and contains the forms of the mind as well as subjective-cognitive elements (the

⁷⁹ S, § 471.

forms of *opinion*), unfolds *freedom, but not as an idea, a principle, or value*, but as the *singularity of freedom*, as the concrete *motivation* of various practices.

Exactly this passage and this context reveals, that for Hegel, freedom is not only an abstract idea unfolding in the spirit, in the history of culture; it is not even connected solely to the universal capability of practical volition, which is an age-old topic of the debates on the freedom of the will. Will is *ab ovo* free, therefore potentially and actually *concrete*, as Hegel emphasizes it in the very first paragraphs of the practical spirit. In contrast to the mind of theoretical reason, the will *gives itself content*, which effects the whole world of practices, including motivations. Subjective will as the essence of the Self attains the particular capacity to *determine itself*. As a result, the spirit as the first, still abstract self-determination of the will “brings itself to existence.” Spirit as this will is a further possibility for the unfolding and explanation of the motivations and activities in the practical spirit.⁸⁰ The nature of freedom, namely, that it is not only an idea, principle and right, but a *concrete sphere, connected to individual lives*, originates in the above, self-determinative property of the spirit. This brings about the task, that the *current* subject of the spirit should make “freedom his or her determination, content, and goal, and also his or her existence.”⁸¹ Which means that in modernity *freedom can and must transform into every single subjective-individual existence*.⁸² In other words, human beings, in any given socio-cultural condition (e.g. as citizens, subjects of law, family members) *follow in their practices their immediate motivations, instincts, desires, passions, but beyond all these, assert the higher need of freedom, which is at the same time embedded in their own particular lives*. This consideration gives Hegel the opportunity to emphasize, that freedom does not remain an abstract idea, principle, and right: it gets built in the concrete motivations and activities of concrete individuals.

As a result of this *Einbildung*, both immediate motivations and freedom-motivation occur as the self-determination of the individuals. *Self-determination* is thus divided into two parts: into the various immediate motivations of the actors on the one hand, and into the higher motivations

⁸⁰ S, § 469.

⁸¹ S, § 469.

⁸² The traditional concept of “free will” is reinterpreted by Hegel: it becomes a key concept to shed light on the different shapes of the subject, including person and personality as *this* individual. This layer of the Hegelian concept of the will has been explored by Michael Quante, “Die ‘Persönlichkeit des Willens’ und das ‘Ich als Dieser’: Bemerkungen zum Individuationsproblem in Hegels Konzeption des Selbstbewusstseins,” 53–67.

of freedom-oriented practices on the other.⁸³ This conceptual constellation makes it possible for Hegel to conceive freedom as *actual freedom*, in which *normative and practical dimensions unite*: the individual can make freedom the immediate cause, form, and content of his or her own particular, concrete-practical activities, as well as his or her own norm and value-orientation, which serves as the foundation of his or her whole lifeworld. This in turn asserts the empirically universal character of freedom as well. In the modern world, all people are free: every individual is free, taken either in oneself or for oneself, i.e. in a *symbolic or in a normative way*. At the same time, one is capable of freeing oneself in a *concrete-actual way*, by means of one's own decisions, choices, activities. The individual will/can become *actually free* at the intersection of the normative and practical dimensions of one's actions and lifeworld.⁸⁴ The *idea, the normative and practical nature of modern freedom*, manifests itself in this actual freedom: its practice is the assertion of the idea of freedom, which is expressed in the manifold embeddedness in particular lifeworlds, which is in turn made possible by self-determination, the *basic principle and right* of modern freedom, the foundation of activities and practices. At the same time, particular practices and their motivations always contain particular, mediocre, prosaic elements and features. It is especially true of the modern world, in which freedom, practiced in principle by every individual in one's own lifeworld, contains both something superior, elevated, and something completely prosaic: inferior, particular elements.⁸⁵ It is important for this very reason to redefine the age-old dilemma of good

⁸³ The concept of self-determination is of crucial importance in the chapter on morality, the central locus of Hegel's theory of the individual. (Cf. R, §§ 104 and 107) A convincing suggestion to shed light on self-determination is Brandom's idea of self-constitution. The complexity of individual existence, the topic of the present work, can partly be explained by the fact – pointed out by Brandom as well – that beings possessing self-conception are submitted to an evolutionary process. Therefore, self-consciousness is a part of actuality, a piece of actuality, including misunderstandings or errors in regard of itself. Beings with self-consciousness can constitute themselves in so far as they submit themselves to their own transformations. This structure also sets in motion the aspects of differentiation and history. Cf. Brandom, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution*, 46–47.

⁸⁴ Actuality, a basic concept discredited already during Hegel's life, still has not regained its due place in the Hegelian conception of practical philosophy. Horstmann raises the question how reason as a primary ontological structure relates to the inclusion of the notion of realization. "The project to systematically justify reason not just as a ground/cause of actuality, but as actuality, is the sole philosophical aim of Hegel." In Dina Emundts and Rolf-Peter Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel*, 36–37. – On the central role of actuality, see Ludwig Siep, *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels*, 50–52.

⁸⁵ On the ambiguous nature of freedom, see Erzsébet Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 13–30.

and evil in modernity, and this time for every individual.⁸⁶ This is where we started and this is where we return: the question of the good and the good life on the horizon of modern freedom. On the horizon of the actual human being,⁸⁷ the secret character of Hegelian practical philosophy, we can now answer the question, whether Hegel has returned to Kant's view regarding the motivations of happiness. He has not: the self-interpreting and self-determining horizon of this subject integrates both motivational structures.

The Hegelian conception has sharpened further the ambiguous character of modern subjective freedom, even though it seemed to round it off. Ambiguity is visible first of all in the concrete activities of particular individuals, in which both the superior and the inferior in the human being makes itself manifest. The same ambiguity can be seen in the controversial character of practical motivations, which posed for Hegel (just as for Kant before him) a great dilemma. The arbitrary character of the different motivations of the single individual, which both Kant and Hegel criticized, opens the way to connect motivations and actions to inferior contents. Hegel sharpens the problem further by stating that this arbitrary character, by the multiplication of motivations – which takes place in the differentiation of the needs of civil society, and deepens the contradiction between luxury and misery – becomes almost unlimited.⁸⁸ This process makes not only the content of motivations arbitrary and unstable, but affects all the activities of the individuals, their lifeworlds and practical dispositions as well.⁸⁹ Hegel uses the term *vacillating attitude* to stress the

⁸⁶ This connection is also pointed out by Francesca Menegoni: just as freedom is human beings' ability to remain themselves (*bei sich bleiben*) even if by alienation they pass over to the other, the good is also impossible to assert and follow without taking evil seriously. The latter is as deeply rooted in human beings as the former. See Menegoni: *Die Frage nach dem Ursprung des Bösen bei Hegel*. In: *Subjektivität und Anerkennung*, 237. – However, this feature of freedom cannot simply be assigned to Hegel's speculative philosophy. Hegel's deep insights regarding the tense and conflicting nature of modernity and economy as its dominant sphere heavily influenced his views on the human being.

⁸⁷ See his crucial remark: "But *the law does not act*; only an actual human being acts." R, 178 (§ 140).

⁸⁸ Cf. R, §§ 185, 191, 241, 243, and 244.

⁸⁹ Hegel's treatment of the simple reaction of ingenuous emotion "to base one's conduct and fixed position in life on a firm foundation." R, 11 (Preface). – This attitude of instinctive reason gains a place value in Hegel's practical philosophy by the fact that beyond its scientific character, philosophy also has a socio-cultural function. Not only religion and art assumes educational tasks to mitigate the destructive effects of the negative dialectic of modern subjective freedom, but philosophy, too. See Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 216–234. – The therapeutic function of Hegelian philosophy is in connection with the task

gravity of the problem. Yet he does not think that freedom can or should be cleansed of this ambiguity. In his alternative, the poles of the controversial nature of individual freedom and self-determination are unavoidable, and are safeguarded as such.

His statement on the ambiguous nature of modern freedom explains why Hegel attributed *two meanings to particularity*. The ambiguous character of modern freedom becomes manifest in the fact that in the particularity of modern existence, in the particular lifeworld of the individuals, there appear both the superior and the inferior in human. The lifeworld unfolding from the particular existence of the Self, generated and contextualized at the intersection of socio-cultural spheres (morality, family, civil society), and the norms and concrete practices creating and maintaining it, contain both characters. In Hegel's view, actual freedom does not consist in the division of these aspects and the dominance of one over the other, but in *connecting the arbitrary character of motivations and practices (which contains particularity as well), to the idea of freedom and the principle of self-determination; both sides limiting the other*. This connection and mutual limitation – as a sort of mediation – expresses an *equalizing* function in the direction of motivations which are susceptible to extremes. (Hegel investigates this typically modern phenomenon in the working principles of civil society, in the system of needs.)⁹⁰ Individuals, who become unstable, are in great need of the opportunity postulated in the connection of these two groups of motivations and their characters, as well as their equalizing effect against the extremes. Connecting normative and concrete-practical elements in this structure makes it possible to introduce the second, superior kind of particularity: freedom-motivation, without having to remain silent about the problematic features of this solution, the weaknesses of motivations from instinct and motivations from happiness, or the tensions between the two basic motivations. This

of education. See Michael Quante, "Spekulative Philosophie als Therapie?" in *Hegels Erbe*, 324–350.

⁹⁰ The mutual dependence and restraint of the two principles of civil society (complementarity) is manifest in the following definition: "The concrete person who, as a *particular* person, as a totality of needs and a mixture of natural necessity and arbitrariness, is his own end, is *one principle* of civil society. But this particular person stands essentially *in relation* to other similar particulars, and their relation is such that each asserts itself and gains satisfaction through the others, and thus at the same time through the exclusive *mediation* of the form of *universality*, which is *the second principle*." R, 220 (§ 182).

is the alternative, broadened by the dimension of economic philosophy, that Hegel suggests, having taken into consideration Kant's objections.⁹¹

A further advantage of Hegel's solution is that by distinguishing between primary and secondary motivations and connecting them internally, the overall structure of practical activities undergoes a change. From this time on, the content of activities does not necessarily have to remain merely arbitrary. The content of activities can be made rational and meaningful by including freedom in empirical-concrete motivations, and the normative requirements of freedom and self-determination can be met as well. By connecting concrete content, and its problematic character to the idea of freedom, the purely arbitrary, contingent, and particular nature of motivations and practices can be limited. This opens a way, along which the *particular lifeworlds of free, modern individuals can attain a certain stability*. This is made possible by the fact that this conception (arguing against Kant) aims the *actual human being*, i.e., all flesh and blood human beings with all of their frailty. This actual human being places and determines him or herself and his or her lifeworld in the complete, contradictory medium of spiritual freedom.⁹² From this viewpoint, the individual's relation to immediate motivation becomes modified: it is treated (accepted or rejected) as one's *own*.

By systematically connecting *the two basic types of motivations and activities to the two kinds of particularity*, the *individuality* of motivations and activities can be preserved without surrendering them completely to subjective arbitrariness and contingency. In the background, we can recognize the Hegelian idea that contingency, and every other similar subjective phenomenon of human life, which keep modern human existence in constant motion and instability, can be kept in hand, without however wanting to negate or eliminate these phenomena, which, in Hegel's view, cannot be eliminated, anyway. Hegel's intention is not to eliminate the ambiguity of actual human existence from actual activities and actual life. On the contrary: to take note of the contingent elements of modern

⁹¹ On Hegel's reception of the British economics, see Manfred Riedel, "Die Rezeption der Nationalökonomie," in *Studien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), 75–99; Priddat, *Hegel als Ökonom* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1990); Erzsébet Rózsa, *Hegel gazdaságfilozófiája* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1993); Erzsébet Rózsa, "Das Prinzip der Besonderheit in Hegels Rechtsphilosophie," in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 182–213.

⁹² Hegel presents actual human being as a shape of individuality in his debate with Kant. R, § 140 – For the debate see also the manuscript notes to § 123: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986) 230–232.

human existence is essential to the Hegelian interpretation of modern existence.⁹³

Limiting the ambiguous nature of modern freedom is also advisable in the context of introducing and developing *subjective and objective guarantees*.⁹⁴ From the viewpoint of the topic in question, Hegel puts emphasis on the former, i.e., subjective elements, cognitive forms, and norms (conscience, decency, honesty), which can contribute to the stabilization in their own way. They are most effective, when *the subjective forms of consciousness (rational insight, conscience, feeling) join with the substantial, universal-normative spheres of the ethical world (the idea of the good, the norm of the good life), which ideas and norms can provide content for the particular motivations and lifeworlds of single individuals. The idea of the good life can serve as a point of orientation for the individual's life conduct in the concrete individual's pursuit of the good – and not only welfare – in one's own, particular life*. In this second form of motivations and activities we face the individual-subjective transformation and integration of the universal as the ethical sphere. The sphere of the ethical world⁹⁵ as a socio-cultural-historical entity, and as the world of *normativity* can be built in the individually completely different, *concrete-particular* goals and contents in a *subjective* way as well. Connecting the universal-normative ethical sphere to the individually varied practical motivations and lifeworlds offers a way out of the dead-end of arbitrary character of individual motivations and activities, rightly criticized by Kant.

Hegel, like Kant, sharply criticizes those motivations and activities which are characterized by arbitrariness and contingency. His main reason is that they lead to the instability of actions and the vacillating attitude of individuals. In his view, this is one of the biggest problems of modernity, which he treats at length in his social and economic philosophy, and

⁹³ This is confirmed by the philosophy of art and the *Aesthetics*. In Hegel's interpretation, modern dramatic poetry is faced with phenomena of the contingency of modern existence leading to the crisis of this genre, and also of art in general. Hegel's thesis about the end of art is not empty speculation: it is based on an in-depth analysis of the spheres and phenomena of modern society. Cf. chapter C.III.

⁹⁴ The main objective guarantee is the constitution, while the subjective guarantee is political disposition. The individuals of modern mass society are dependent on such guarantees. Cf. R, §§ 264–270.

⁹⁵ On moral world as the center of Hegel's practical philosophy, see Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) – Pippin interprets ethical and political philosophy as a theory of human action. In his view, the most important conditions of action are the free subject and rationality.

elucidates from many sides with examples from modern drama.⁹⁶ On the complex interpretive horizon outlined above, Hegel presents another version of particularity which is at the same time the manifestation of the extra significance of certain dimensions of his system. In this other version, the individually different, concrete-particular lifeworlds which unfold particular existence, and the versatile motivations and activities connected to them are brought to consciousness and combined by their *individual-subjective* attachment to universal contents and substantial values.

In the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, he sets forth this program as follows: reasonable insight (*vernünftige Einsicht*) and reasonable position toward actuality (*vernünftige Stellung zur Wirklichkeit*) constitute the adequate cognitive and normative-practical habitual disposition of modern human being, which make one capable of treat one's own individual goals, intentions, needs, and interests rationally, and thus build a firm position in life (*feste Stellung im Leben*). The rationality of activities and habitual dispositions is manifested by the fact that the individual respects the motivations of others, and the more or less institutionalized actuality, and as a result, sets his or her aims and realizes them appropriately. Provided one is capable and willing to revise, sort, and rearrange one's motivations and practices theoretically and epistemically, as well as to rectify, mediate, and assert them practically, in other words, to act in *one's particular way* rationally in this sense, too.⁹⁷ Rationality is not to be understood here as reason integrated in the conceptual system of Hegelian philosophy, but as a way of thinking and conduct connected to the simple behavior of impartial healthy human intellect, common sense, which everyone possesses instinctively.⁹⁸ All this expresses Hegel's conviction that the understanding and reserved acceptance of the character

⁹⁶ It is no accident that Hegel brings forth some questions of modern drama in the chapter on morality of the *Philosophy of Right*. Cf. § 118, 124 and 126; also the manuscript notes, in *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 218–237.

⁹⁷ The inclusion of theoretical conduct in practice is presented not only in natural consciousness, but also in religious conduct. It is especially clear from the 1821 manuscript. See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Vol. 1 (1993), 3–27. – On the relation between religious consciousness and theoretical and practical conduct, see Erzsébet Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 493–570.

⁹⁸ For a profound study of the connection between Hegelian philosophy and natural consciousness, see Christoph Halbig, *Objektives Denken: Erkenntnistheorie und Philosophie of Mind in Hegels System* (Stuttgart: Frommann – Holzboog, 2002), especially 316–324 and 372–374.

and essence of individual lifeworlds by the individuals is itself a stabilizing factor in their otherwise unstable life conduct.

As we have seen, the secret – but all the more important – comprehensive subject of Hegel's practical philosophy is actual human being. This subject-shape in its secretly eminent status shows how freedom and reason, and in both what is essential in human becomes manifest, could and should be introduced to the motivations and practices of *every human being*. In § 482, which explicates the *essence of subjective-free spirit in the context of objective spirit*, the mutual references of these concepts – freedom, reason, actuality – highlight the main point: “*the idea of freedom*” becomes “*the existence of reason by rational will*” (motivation and activity of individuals) in the singular will (particular practices of individuals), and thus “*actuality*” (particular lifeworld).⁹⁹

One of the central passages of Hegel's practical philosophy, which has an utmost importance as a text corpus, is found at the intersection of the subjective and objective spirit, in the free spirit. Spirit as a single individual now *knows* him or herself to be free, and *wants* to determine him or herself as free. This means that in “actuality” a practical behavior is not impregnated and influenced only by objective, conceptual, intersubjective and institutional elements, but by subjective cognitive elements (insight, conscience, feeling) as well. Instinct is no longer the content of these cognitive elements and the motivations and actions underlying them, as in the representation of happiness; it is freedom that motivates the individuals' will, determines their aims and actions, thoughts and feelings in general. However, the main goal of the individual is not freedom as such, as idea and principle, but freedom's *individualization*: to develop him or herself as a freely thinking and acting agent, and to posit the content of his or her goals and actions (the “essence” of the spirit is freedom)¹⁰⁰ as existence (Dasein); as his or her *own* actuality. Freedom as an idea and norm is insufficient in itself.

Freedom must be asserted in the actual, practical dimension of life: its essence is a world of freedom, which individuals first envision as an idea, and get to its consciousness as liberty. The main point is that they place freedom in the centre of their own activities and feelings, their insight and conscience. The primary practical dimension of freedom consists in the

⁹⁹ Cf. S, 482.

¹⁰⁰ Hegel defines freedom as the “essence of spirit” in a systematic conceptual and cultural-historical context. S, § 382.

fact, that individuals realize *the idea of freedom by their practical activities and appropriate cognitive elements, i.e. in actual practical transformations, permeated by the processes of cognition and feeling*. In principle, the right and possibility of this can be attributed *to the activities and lifeworlds of every rationally thinking and acting individual*. The realization of the idea of freedom as the basic process of modernity takes palace by the mediation of “individuals and nations,” whose representation of freedom has an “uncontrollable strength,” because “freedom is the very essence of spirit.”¹⁰¹ This “uncontrollable strength” of freedom is not only detectable in its ideality or normativity, but is of *concrete* help in executing the practices of concrete, actual individuals, and constructing their lifeworlds. Hegel ascribes all this to modern Europe: “It was through Christianity that this Idea came into the world. According to Christianity, the individual as such has an infinite value.”¹⁰² Although Hegel refers here to the normative values of Christianity, he emphasizes the importance of “worldly existence” for modern subjective freedom: in modernity, the sphere of “worldly existence” is the ground for the practices and the lifeworld – *the components and frames of individual life*. Actual subjective freedom is to be sought in the *particular, worldly existence* of single individuals, and *particular, subjective feeling, which however has substantial contents*; and can be found at the *intersection of the normative and practical dimensions* of their lifeworld. As Hegel says, “These institutions are due to the guidance of that spirit, and are constituted after its measure; whilst by their existence the moral temper comes to be indwelling in the individual, so that in this sphere of particular existence, of present sensation and volition, he is *actually* free.”¹⁰³

The idea of freedom, and its connection with the sphere of actuality leads us back to the modern problem of the individual existence of the actual human being. The individuals conceive of the idea of freedom as a basic motivation, as self-determination: they *think, know, feel, and want themselves to be free*.¹⁰⁴ They conceive of the idea of freedom as their own, and realize it in their proper particular worldly existence. However, it is possible only if they *integrate the elements of the sphere of ethical life in this particular existence – their own lifeworld* – and vice versa: they attach their own particular lifeworld to the sphere of ethical life. The feeling of

¹⁰¹ S, § 482.

¹⁰² S, § 482.

¹⁰³ S, § 482.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the manuscript notes to § 105, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 203.

the ethical is the medium, where the *practical* realization of the *normatively* founded self-determination is not only prepared intellectually and rationally, as a property of conceptual thought, but emotionally as well. By *connecting ethical life as a complex of norms with feeling as a specific reflective form, or cognitive element*, modern individuals can be *actually free* in this sphere of particular existence, present feeling and volition.¹⁰⁵

As we have seen, Hegel investigates the question, how the individual can integrate freedom – which is at first ideal in nature, i.e. only a concept, a principle of the spirit and the heart and which later develops into a legal, ethical and religious, as well as scientific actuality or in other words, becomes institutionalized – into one's own particular practical activities and lifeworld in a concrete and actual way.¹⁰⁶ The answer to this question can be found in Hegel's theory of the objective spirit, where particular existence is not only the present world of feeling and volition as here, in the subjective spirit, but a world, in which the individual can find one's own right and can create one's own particular actuality. Its first step is, when affirmative content (constituted by the instincts), which belongs to happiness as the first, universal representational group of motivations, becomes basically rearranged and reinterpreted by the idea of freedom, as a thought, felt, and willed universal norm, and as such, a superior motivation.

From this aspect we can also understand, *why freedom becomes a motivation for individuals*. Freedom is an internal determination and aim and it refers as such to the external, ready-made world. This ready-made world is divided into needs and external natural things on the one hand, and relations of single individuals on the other.¹⁰⁷ This is how the system of freedom-determinations is produced, to which power and recognition (the consciousness of validity) belong. *Recognition* is a confirmation and an intersubjective act, which initiates the universalization of the original, particular-individual motivations and the inclusion of the higher motivation of freedom, although the latter only occurs initially as the simple actuality of freedom.¹⁰⁸ This form of universalization is an important step in connecting to ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*): universal gets informed in subjective will, i.e. the individual's motivations and activities, as its custom, way of thinking and character. That is exactly ethical life – confirms

¹⁰⁵ S, § 482.

¹⁰⁶ S, § 482.

¹⁰⁷ S, § 483.

¹⁰⁸ S, § 485.

Hegel.¹⁰⁹ This universalization fills the frames of the individuals' activities and lives with the normative world of ethical life, and thus serves to stabilize the individuals and their life conduct. The content of the individual's activities is "freed from the mixedness and fortuitousness, attaching to it in the practical feeling and in impulse"¹¹⁰ Now, the normative world of ethical life is not given as custom or tradition, but is valid as the individual's *own ethical life*.¹¹¹ True, that universalization can also take place by means of *power*, as it does in laws. Law, however, does not penetrate the individual's way of thinking and feeling as ethics, although power itself is a sort of universality and ethics (Sitte). Hegel also speaks of the power of ethical life. However, the point is, that it is clearly visible how freedom as a superior motivational aspect, the great topic of subjective spirit, is connected with the ethical sphere, the topic of – objective spirit. We do not break up our bonds with the first, immediate motivations of the actual human being in this connection, either. *It is exactly this double bond between the equally normative backgrounds of the subjective idea and motivation of freedom on the one hand, and objective ethical life on the other, that offers the opportunity of stability for the diverse world of practices, and the multitude and multiplicity of particular lifeworlds.* This dynamic structure of freedom-motivation does not alter the validity of Hegel's thesis, which states that freedom is the principle of the modern world in a historical context as well; just as being a principle does not eliminate the fact that freedom as a motivation of practices is articulated in the dimensions of particular existence and concrete lifeworld; subjective will, the right of self-determination as an ideal entity; and ethical life (the good life, the idea of the good, and welfare) as content. These various planes of meaning and structural-conceptual constellations, as well as the changing perspectives in the whole medium of the spirit are of crucial importance for Hegel's practical philosophy, and all of its domains: in these perspectives, different meanings come to the front at different times, while all of them retain their own, proper, interconnected significance.¹¹² The extra meaning of systemic dimensions has been clearly shown above. We also found

¹⁰⁹ S, § 485.

¹¹⁰ S, § 485.

¹¹¹ S, § 486.

¹¹² The varying perspectives have an important role in carrying and constituting meanings in Hegel's practical philosophy. See Erzsébet Rózsa, "Mehrdimensionalität der praktischen Philosophie," in *Versöhnung und System*, 72–76, and chapter A.II of the present work.

an excellent example to demonstrate how the authentic textual corpus of our topic is generated en route.

3. THE STRUCTURAL AND THEMATIC QUESTIONS OF PARTICULAR EXISTENCE AND CONCRETE-PARTICULAR LIFEWORLD IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT

the individual [...] in this sphere of particular existence, of the present sensation and volition [...] is *actually free*.¹¹³

“Particular existence” – as the first, abstract shape of the individual’s lifeworld – is a structural element of the spirit that Hegel introduces in the subjective spirit, and articulates further in the framework of the objective spirit. This reveals the specific Hegelian construction of practical philosophy: the problematic of practical philosophy cannot be reduced to the objective spirit; the whole structure of the spirit constitutes the proper locus of practical philosophy.¹¹⁴ In consequence, *the topic of particular existence and lifeworld can be investigated in an appropriate manner at the intersection of the subjective and objective spirit*. In this framework, two contentually decisive aspects of particular existence and the lifeworld explicated from it become conspicuous. It is in accordance with Hegel’s treatment of particular existence in relation to the subjective-structural elements (e.g., motivations), whose spectrum extends from instincts through happiness to freedom on the one hand; on the other hand, he conceives of the abstract particular existence of the Self – unfolding it in the framework of the objective spirit – as a constitutive component of the objective-institutional structures of modern society: as the lifeworld of concrete-particular individuals. In this respect, particular existence and the world explicated from it is not only the lifeworld of single individuals, but a peculiar world interwoven in the partially institutionalized spheres of actuality. *The institutionalized frames and forms of private life (marriage, family), the institutionalized forms of general civil life (profession, corporation), and the corresponding system of rights and ethical norms also belong to the lifeworld*. However, not in their institutional or normative objectivity, but interwoven in the elements of the individuals lifeworld (insight,

¹¹³ S, § 482.

¹¹⁴ On the architectonics of Hegel’s practical philosophy see Rózsa: *Versöhnung und System*, 88–98, and also chapter A.II.3 of the present work.

justification, feeling, conscience, faith, family love, solidarity within corporation, legal culture etc.).¹¹⁵

The subjective (intersubjective) and objective-institutional, practical and normative dimensions and components are recognizable not only at the intersection of the subjective and objective spirit, but in the framework of the objective spirit as well, which is clearly put forward by the *Philosophy of Right*.¹¹⁶ Abstract law, morality, family, civil society, and state are not only institutional forms, but the objectifications of individual actions and forms of life, which become more or less institutionalized and provide space and a framework for the motivations and activities of subjects as individuals and communities. One of the merits of Hegel's conception is that in this manifoldly articulated framework of the system of practical philosophy, he took note of both the gains and the losses that modernity brought about for individuals. His starting point is the assumption that philosophy is in a position to provide diagnosis, show ways out, and offer solutions.

My discussion will follow the construction of the *Philosophy of Right*. I investigate my topic first in the field of abstract law, which has become one of the important constituent of the framework of human life in modernity. In abstract law, I do not investigate the contentual determinations of the lifeworld, hence these do not belong to the world of abstract law. Hegel treats here primarily the formal-universal and external modes of modern individuals' freedom. His starting point is that individuals in their relation to modern law, interpret and determine themselves as persons; they comprehend and assert their freedom first in relation to inanimate objects. One relates to other persons mediated by the institution of property, therefore their relation remains abstract. Thus, freedom in the framework of law can only be asserted formally. There is no concrete relation between persons, or concrete self-determination in this sphere. The right of my subjective will only appears in morality, opening the possibility of another level of self-determination, and starting to

¹¹⁵ An aspect of the structure of the *Philosophy of Right* which is relevant for my topic has been pointed out by Cobben's reconstruction of the first, second, and third systematic shape of the Self (Selbst). The first shape belongs to the sphere of law, the second to civil society, the third to the state. Cf. Paul Cobben, *The Nature of the Self* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 150–231.

¹¹⁶ I only examine Hegel's theory of institutions under the perspective of subjective freedom and self-determination as the basic principle and basic right of modernity. Whether this theory is liberal or conservative requires further inquiry and most of all a different perspective.

develop appropriate grounds for the explanation of intersubjective-social relations of individuals which will be exposed in ethical life. The decisive step of morality shows us that we can only attain the actual foundation of our life if it becomes clear to us that our relation to ourselves and others is dependent on our self-determination, our own personality: the real fact is that the whole law and its every article is based on free personality alone – on self-determination or autonomy, which is the very opposite of *determination by nature*.¹¹⁷ Hegel holds that in modern freedom, in its institutional and normative spheres, everything is based and dependent on self-determination as *free personality*.

Hegel focuses on the importance of *self-determination* in the freedom of modern society in the framework of morality.¹¹⁸ The levels of self-determination discussed in the shapes of the subjective spirit are superseded in the objective spirit, because Hegel lays stress on the (changed) *contexts* of self-determination. He presents a conceptual construction and constellation, by which modern *legal system* can be internally linked to the eminent *moral* status of self-determination, and by a further development of this construction, he also includes *the practical and normative aspects of ethical life* in this. The *triadic context* of self-determination (*law, morality, ethical life*) and their relations are of basic importance for the Hegelian interpretation of modern freedom.

This way, we can get a consistent explanation of the eminent position of ethical life in the Hegelian concept of modern freedom: we can see how Hegel goes beyond the usual, modern definition of freedom, related only to individuals.¹¹⁹ *He includes in the problematic of freedom also its socio-cultural, legal, political, economic, moral, and historical aspects.* On this *broad and manifoldly articulated interpretive horizon*, freedom gains an outstanding significance from the viewpoint of particular existence (which is to be determined individually, as lifeworld): this determination

¹¹⁷ S, § 502.

¹¹⁸ R, §§ 104 and 107. On the Hegelian conception of self-determination see Brandom, "Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution," in *Hegels Erbe*, 46–52. – McDowell says of the connection between self-determination and norms that the source of norms should be in ourselves. This is Kant's version. Hegel includes a social dimension in norm-giving as well, pulling the Kantian rationalist idea "down to earth" through our common practices. See McDowell, "Selbstbestimmende Subjektivität und externer Zwang," in *Hegels Erbe*. His intention is to correct Brandom's account of institutionalized norms, which he regards as one-sided. (Ibid., 207)

¹¹⁹ See Erzsébet Rózsa, "A szubjektivitás mint a modern filozófia elve Hegelnél," in *Don Quijote.hu – avagy a filozófia vándorútjai*, ed. Kissné Éva Novák and Sándor Laczkó, 190–214 (Szeged, 2011).

executed by the individuals takes place by the *internal linking of the initially abstract existence to various ethical contents and legal elements*, in their own inner world and lifeworld, which in turn broadens to a concrete-particular world. The normative base of the attainability of the claim to realization and validity (legitimacy) hidden in self-determination is the ‘right to particularity,’ which is one of the basic rights of modern individuality in the Hegelian conception. As the right of self-determination, the right to particularity is also everyone’s due. The right to particularity mediates the *claim to realization*; to *actuality* as reality and realization. This complex conceptual constellation gives us an opportunity to point out how individual life is enriched by modern freedom, and also how deficiencies may occur and multiply. On this manifold interpretive horizon, the *same phenomenon can appear both as a gain and a loss*. This is precisely the dialectics of modern freedom in Hegel.

3.1. *The Outlines of Modern Individuality in Morality*

... the infinite subjectivity of freedom, which now has being *for itself*, constitutes the principle of the moral point of view.¹²⁰

A higher *ground* has thereby been determined for freedom; the idea’s aspect of *existence*, its real moment, is now the *subjectivity* of the will.¹²¹

Right and all of its determinations are founded on the free individual – as Hegel sums up the essence of the subject of law. However, the nature of free personality is not yet sufficiently explained in abstract law. This need is met in the sphere of morality by moral subjectivity as a self-reflective and self-determinative individuality.¹²² Moral individuality is produced in the relations of self-reflection and self-determination, as a constellation of these concepts. Its meaning is elucidated by morality’s own perspective: we contemplate this conceptual constellation from here. Hegel calls this viewpoint the moral point of view which is of utmost importance for the modern theory of individuality: self-oriented, self-interpreting and self-determining/self-disposing subjectivity is a basic feature of modern individuality. It is from here that we can understand the specific

¹²⁰ R, § 104.

¹²¹ R, § 106.

¹²² On the unity of practical and theoretical conduct, see the manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), §§ 4 and 49.

set of concepts that Hegel uses to describe the self-reflection and self-determination (self-disposition) of individuality as a texture of specifying theoretical and practical acts, peculiar epistemic forms, and other determinations belonging to the inner world (conscience, feeling, etc.) The common feature of these concepts is that they express primarily the properly moral viewpoint and relation, the individual's relations to itself. We can reconstruct the central shape of subjective freedom and moral individuality by means of these concepts and relations. This conceptual constellation opens a complex interpretive horizon, which rests on the *basic double structure* of freedom in the modern world as substantial individuality and socio-historical principle, and as the right to self-determination of modern individuality.¹²³ The moral point of view highlights the second element of this basic structure, in contrast to ethical life.

The moral self-reflection and self-determination of modern individuality as rights *ab ovo* normative in nature. Hegel investigates this normativity more closely in the system of the rights of morality. Abstract law is specified and concretized by the system of rights connected to morality, and its *subjective value*, normativity. Hegel examines the following rights in the framework of morality: moral point of view as the right of subjective will, the right of moral will, the right of knowledge, the right of intention, the right of the subject's particularity, the right to particular welfare, the right to understand the good, the right of conscience. To demonstrate, that this morality is indeed subjective, let us quote Hegel's words on the ethical nature of action: "the subsumption of an action under the determination of the good is the responsibility of the *subject*. Under these circumstances, any semblance of ethical objectivity has completely disappeared."¹²⁴ The value of an action has become dependent on personal conviction, as a manifestation of subjectivity. These rights and the subjective normativity expressed in them constitute the internal condition of concrete practical relations and actions. In other words, self-reflection and self-determination (in Brandom's terms, self-conception

¹²³ In Moyar's view, *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* stand in a complementary relation, in so far as the former has the individual as the ultimate source of authority, while the latter describes institutions which can prevent the withdrawal of the individuals' autonomy and authority. Dean Moyar, "Die Verwirklichung meiner Autorität," in *Hegels Erbe*, 211–3. – In fact, the *Philosophy of Right* has a different status, which is shown by the fact that the individuals' authority is the center of the chapter on morality. In addition, each institutional sphere (law, family, society, politics) has its corresponding individual authority-shape. This Hegelian conception is discussed in detail in the present work.

¹²⁴ R, 177 (§ 140).

and self-constitution) signify those constellations of concepts in morality, which gain their own proper extra meaning precisely in their relations proceeding from the perspective of the subject's inner world. The moral point of view does not simply emphasize the self-orientation of the subject, but gives it a specific perspective: the inner world.¹²⁵

In light of this, the positing of values originating in the inner world as a peculiar actuality, we can understand the basic structure of morality composed of the triadic relation, according to which *subject is free, knows itself to be free, and wants itself to be free*.¹²⁶ These three relations of the subject, in Hegel's term, *Verhältnisse*, express the *existential* (the subject is free), *epistemic* (the subject knows itself to be free) and *practical* (the subject wants itself to be free) aspects of human existence as individual existence. These aspects and their relations point to the basic structure of moral point of view and its form of subjectivity, primarily from the specific moral perspective of the inner world, and beyond this, on the systematically and historically much broader horizon of modern subjective freedom. The broad interpretation of morality, extended to the whole area of the practical sphere is in close connection with the *foundation of subjective freedom and the exposition of its nature*. Hegel first introduces this systematic consideration in a historical context, and assigns it to the European spirit: this subjective or moral freedom is what a European especially calls freedom.¹²⁷ This broad horizon, however, does not eliminate the priority of the perspective proceeding from the subject's inner world in morality.

Self-determination plays an important role in abstract law as well, although it only becomes the basic element of subjective freedom in morality. Law and all its determinations are founded on the free personality – as Hegel summed up the essence of self-determination in abstract law. However, the perspective of the free personality of abstract law is different from that of moral subjectivity. The perspective of the legal subject proceeds from its relation to things, i.e. property, while that of the moral subject is its inner world. This difference affects the levels of self-determination in the spheres of law and morality.

¹²⁵ For Taylor, the topos of modern individual's self-identity is inwardness. This topography is tightly connected to the feeling of the Self (*Selbstgefühl*): it is a property of modern Western world. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 111–114.

¹²⁶ See the manuscript notes to § 105: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 203.

¹²⁷ S, § 503.

Hegel points out in the first paragraph of the *Encyclopedia* on morality, that the definition of moral is not simply being the opposite of physical in the sphere of spirit. "But here the moral signifies volitional mode, so far as it is in the *interior* of the will in general."¹²⁸ Hegel joins morality with subjective will, the comprehensive category of practical spirit, at the same time that he specifies it according to the moral point of view: the subjective will as inner world provides moral self-determination's own perspective. This perspective is projected to the (already given) motivations and the future activities of self-determining individuals. The starting point of practices as subjective determinations of the will is in the inner world of the individuals (usually inside the will) which is crucial for the Hegelian theory of action.¹²⁹ In addition, self-determination is the foundation of practices – all practices.

Let us examine now more closely, what the moral sphere and perspective adds to the former approaches of self-determination. Hegel discusses this question in § 104 of the *Philosophy of Right*. His answer emphasizes that

the concept of freedom develops from the will's initially abstract determinacy to its self-related determinacy, and hence to the *self-determination of subjectivity* [...] In property, the will's determinacy is *abstract possession*, and is therefore located in an external thing; in contract, it is possession *mediated by will*, and merely held *in common* [...] In the moral point of view, it [i.e. the will's abstract determinacy] has been overcome to the extent that this contingency itself, as reflected *into itself* and *identical with itself*, is the infinite and inwardly present contingency of the will, i.e. its *subjectivity*.¹³⁰

Self-determinacy, as a twofold self-relating subjectivity (reflecting on itself and assuming self-identity) is a property of the moral point of view. The process of stepping into relations is the cultivation of the ground on which freedom is now established, i.e. subjectivity, while its result is that the idea of freedom receives its actual realization. Subjective will determines itself as objective, and hence as truly concrete.¹³¹ The special status of subjectivity in morality is summed up in the statement that, in accordance with the right of the subjective will, the will can *recognize* something or

¹²⁸ S, § 503.

¹²⁹ On morality as a theory of action, see Michael Quante, *Hegels Begriff der Handlung*. (Stuttgart: Frohmann-Holzboog, 1993). – Quante's interpretation offers conceptual points to clarify the connections between the elements of Hegel's philosophy involved in debates on practices (e.g., the self-determining individual as authority) and institutions.

¹³⁰ R, 132 (§ 104).

¹³¹ R, 135 (§ 106).

be something only in so far as that thing is its *own*, and in so far as the will is present to itself in it as subjectivity.¹³² In the *Philosophy of the Spirit*, Hegel says that subjective will is *morally* free, so far as these features are its inward institution; its own, and willed by it.¹³³

Morality has *two specific contentual features* in relation to subjective freedom. One is the recognition of the difference between good and evil, which is not to be understood in a general sense, but in a cultural and historical context, and as individually interpreted and determined. On the one hand, we can think of the norms, requirements, and rules given in a certain cultural milieu, which influence our knowledge and decisions about good and evil. On the other hand, there is free space for individuals in the moral sphere of subjective freedom: authorities can no longer prescribe what is good or evil. Good and evil are affirmed, recognized, or justified in the individuals heart, sentiment, conscience, intelligence (*bel esprit*), etc.¹³⁴ This twofold determination of the will – the given historico-cultural background and the need of inner justification – sheds light on the deeper nature of self-determination that has not been investigated so far. It helps to understand the special significance of the individual's subjective freedom as self-determination in modernity, without however wanting to oppose freedom as an idea, principle, and value to their *socio-cultural and normative commitments*. Subjective freedom, which had been abstract in the beginning – as idea, principle, right – becomes everyone's due in modernity: freedom thematized in morality belongs to individuals both as abstract beings possessing the right of subjective will, and as beings with concrete self-determination.

At first, this relation is one of *the still abstract universality (principle, idea, right) and the similarly abstract singularity*: every single individual has the right to subjective will and self-determination. However, one cannot be deprived of one's attachment to traditions and norms, e.g. one's culturally and historically determined, and thereby limited, representation of good and evil. Thus Hegel asserts the empirically universal claim of freedom, but at the same time wants to supersede its abstract character in two respects. *Overcoming the abstract character* of the universal (of principles, ideas, laws) and the singular (*this* single individual) in every individual's freedom is made possible by the *introduction of particularity*,

¹³² R, 136 (§ 107).

¹³³ S, § 503.

¹³⁴ S, § 503.

which also makes it a fertile idea for the theory of individuality. Hegel's theory of morality becomes a crucial part of his conception of the modern individual exactly through its illuminating connection with the concept of particularity.

The introduction of particularity to the concept of the will in the *Philosophy of Right* starts with morality, although it culminates in civil society. The Hegelian conception of morality is treated in detail in this work. In the sphere of morality, which he exposes in the Introduction and enlarges in the chapter on morality, Hegel joins the determination of particularity first with the existence of the Self (Dasein des Ich). The abstract Self, whose particular existence is already mentioned in the subjective spirit, does not initially possess this. It has to go over from undifferentiated indeterminacy to *differentiation*, *determination*, and the *positing* of a determinacy as a content and object.¹³⁵ The existence of the Self as such, reminds of the negative, the finitude of life, and evil. However, he also refers to the positive in it: the particularization of the I, which starts in the initially abstract, undifferentiated existence of the Self ("*Besonderung des Ich*").¹³⁶ In this context, Hegel argues against Kant and Fichte. In his manuscript notes, he makes the remark: "I do not *want* only, I want *something*, i.e. *something particular*."¹³⁷ Determination and distinction is nothing else than the beginning of the particularization of the human individual, the very start of the realization of the initially abstract personal existence. This process has its advantages in moderating the aforesaid negative effects given in existence (hollow, contentless existence). The articulation of the negative and positive features in the existence of the self is attainable not only through reflective acts, but also through activities: unfolding the Faustian nature of European human being is perhaps Hegel's most preferred way to take account of the negative features of existence, and offer protection against them. It is no accident in this respect either, that Hegel's theory of morality can be seen as a theory of action as well.

However, the initial negative features live on in existence turning into actuality: differentiation as particularization, as the basic mark of determination can be viewed partly as one-sidedness, finitude, deficiency in itself: *differentiation* causes losses. On the other hand, it has its positive import, which starts to appear in the singular form of human existence, i.e.

¹³⁵ R, 39 (§ 6).

¹³⁶ R, 39 (§ 6).

¹³⁷ See the manuscript notes to the *Philosophy of Right*: "Ich will nicht nur, sondern ich will *Etwas*, d.i. ein *Besonderes*." Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts (1986), 53.

personal existence as life. In so far as in personal existence a movement starts which supersedes the initial abstractness, contentlessness of life. This is the transition to particular existence which existence later unfolds as the peculiar lifeworlds of concrete individuals in the contexts of the ethical world. This change is advantageous inasmuch as the multiple differentiation in the particular-concrete lifeworlds gives the individuals an opportunity to keep distance from the universal, abstract negative features of existence, and to enrich existence with various, novel, worldly contents. Thus the deficiency, finitude and negative connotation of individual existence as such is counterbalanced by its particular existence which originates in individuality, but turns against it, and the particular-concrete lifeworld that unfolds from it. *The lifeworld of the Self, which is abstract, but for this very reason open, concrete, waiting for specific self-determination, and providing it later for the modern individual, is the counterbalance of deficient, negative and empty existence.* The existential dimension lends a peculiar tension and a deeper meaning to Hegel's theory of morality and the theoretical considerations of the individual in it. At this point we can raise the question of the intensive connection between the thought of the mature Hegel and the young Hegel again. Let us recall the Frankfurt writings on the divided, torn, alienated individual existence.

Will, on the other hand, as the comprehensive Hegelian concept of activity, calls our attention to the *eminent status of practical philosophy*. Will plays an important role in the discussion of problems appearing in various *divisions* – *in the socio-culturally contextualized empirical world of modernity*. However, Hegel not only views this field as a social phenomenon and an empirical world, but expresses it in *categorical* interrelations. He discusses the modern individual's essence and identity at the intersection of social, epistemic, and epistemological-logical spheres. In logical terms, Hegel explicates the unity of the *universal* as abstract and *particularity* derived from the universal as a *concrete singular*. This unity (*concrete particularity*) is the logical formula of the second identity of the individual, superseding the first immediate unity. It proceeds from the two (first, abstract and second, concrete) levels of the universal and the singular, and their mutual relations. The second singular can no longer be interpreted in its immediacy, as one (Eins). This singular is at the same time universal, on a second, concrete level. Particularity attains its eminent status and relevant extra meaning exactly at the intersection of the second singular and the second universal. That is how Hegel's remark becomes interesting for us: in the second universal, particular is no longer an opposite of universal, but *equalized* with universal. Accordingly, singular

is no longer to be understood as one, in its isolation, but appears at the intersection of the universal and the particular.¹³⁸ These *relations of the particular* produce actual singularity (wahrhafte Einzelheit), which is identical with the second, higher order particularity.¹³⁹ This logical formula makes us capable of approaching one of the great topics of Hegelian practical philosophy, i.e. the transition of abstract personal existence to particular, concrete lifeworld in an adequate manner in the Hegelian sense. This logical formation, specified in the medium of the spirit, broadens to a conceptual constellation, in which a particular existence and the lifeworld of the concrete person becomes eminent. This logical constellation appearing at the intersection of logic and the philosophy of spirit offers a significant contentual-conceptual gain for the relevant interpretation of the essence of modern individuality, which is one of the basic questions of the Hegelian theory of modernity.

Hegel calls these mutual logical-categorical relations *mediation*. Mediation has a role in the framework of practical philosophy as well, which is nothing other than the character of the activity mediating itself in itself, which becomes part of the basic structure of a subject's activities.¹⁴⁰ Particular determination – whose origin takes us back to motivations from instinct and from happiness characteristic of the subjective spirit – becomes *subjective end* in the medium of practical activities, translating the *subjective end* into *objectivity* through the mediation of activity and a means.¹⁴¹ This problem is taken up once more in § 25, where we meet three aspects of subjectivity: 1. the pure form of self-consciousness, 2. the particularity of the will as arbitrariness and as the contingent content of whatever ends the will may pursue, 3. one-sided form in general.¹⁴²

As the above logical formula (singular, particular, universal), this triple determination also reveals something that has always been important for Hegel. His aim is to *express both the symptoms of deficiency and the gains of modern freedom which appear in individuality, as a logical-conceptual shape and at the same time in its spirit-conceptual type of individuality – and both at the level of phenomena and as a concept occupying a location and playing a certain role within the system*. The first of these three aspects

¹³⁸ R, 41–42 (§ 7).

¹³⁹ On foundations in natural philosophy, logic and philosophy of spirit see chapter B.I.

¹⁴⁰ R, 42 (§ 7).

¹⁴¹ R, 43 (§ 8).

¹⁴² R, 55 (§ 25).

of subjectivity refers to the *eminent status of the self-consciousness* of the modern human being as a single individual. The second highlights *arbitrariness*, which necessarily appears in the particularity of subjectivity, while the third emphasizes the *one-sidedness* resulting from the above. The extra meaning deriving from the spirit-philosophical contextualization of the logical formation now confronts us as a very important conceptual question.

3.2. *The Normative and Practical Dimensions of Self-Determination in Modern Ethical Life*

For whereas morality is the form of the will in general in its subjective aspect, ethical life is not just the subjective form and self-determination of the will: it also has its own concept, namely freedom, as its content.¹⁴³

Ethical life is the *Idea of freedom* as the living good which has its knowledge and volition in self-consciousness, and its actuality through self-conscious action.¹⁴⁴

The sphere of morality is the medium of subjective singularity (subjektive Einzelheit), and as such, the center of the theory of the individual. The chapter on morality is one of the central passages of this theory. However, we have not discussed the topic of individuality in itself, but – following the Hegelian construction of the text – in relations of law and morality. As we have just pointed out, we gained an extra meaning this way. We have good reasons to suppose that in the following, an extra meaning can be explored in the relations between morality and ethical life concerning the Hegelian concept of modern individuality as well. In the relation of morality and ethical life, we find that the singular determines itself first in opposition to the universal, in so far as it conceives of norms like *the good as internal*, as the very contrary of the *existing, given world*. At the same time, these *two sides* mediate each other: this mediation is seen by Hegel both as the actualization of cultural-historical traditions, norms, customs, and as self-determination in the creation of new worlds and determinations. Modern individuality does not come out of nowhere, and it does not create itself from itself: it is the product of exactly this *double bond*. This dual nature of individual existence, the mediations, links, relations, oscillating movements between its existential and empirical, practical

¹⁴³ R, 186 (§ 141).

¹⁴⁴ R, 189 (§ 142).

singularity – the immediate subject of its moral self-determination on the one hand – and its historical, cultural, and normative universality, i.e. individual existence being rooted in the medium of culture (the objective spirit) on the other, provides us with *modern individuality*, with the sum of the forms of subjectivity of abstract law preserved in it, as well as ethical life. This dual nature suggests another view explaining the further articulation of the individual's particular existence, for the dual character of individual existence points to the fact that self-identity is no longer given or obvious for the modern human being. *Self-identity is not an endowment, but a need and an end. What is evident in relation to existence is duality and ambiguity, and not self-identity.*¹⁴⁵

The chapter on morality emphasizes the normative and individual-subjective aspects of this existential position and not its historical context. This method follows from the eminence of the systematic approach. However, the normative character of morality has a different meaning here than it does in the case of Kant. Hegel lays stress on both sides of the duality: on the inner world of the individual, and the actuality of the present world, which is given, but at the same time open to critique. In this second world, albeit only in the background, there are traces of past times: the historical cannot be fully eliminated from current existence. That is why there can be no pure practical reason, according to Hegel. History as the formation of past experience is preserved in cultural memory which is an integral part of the present, calling into question the possibility of pure reason.¹⁴⁶

The dual, socio-cultural and individual origin of existence is an important explanatory principle regarding the modern individual's *right to self-determination*. The world confronting each and every human being is never pure; it is always interwoven with cultural traditions, customs, forms and contents of memory. This layer of the past also serves as a norm: the world

¹⁴⁵ See the motive of opposition (Entgegensetzung), and the duality of "separate self" and inwardly "unified self" which precedes the Frankfurt conception of love. In Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *On Christianity – Early Theological Writings* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 302–308.

¹⁴⁶ Here we attach the Gadamerian concepts of reconstruction and integration to cultural remembrance, i.e. we understand it in the Hegelian sense, whereby we get closer to the hermeneutical task of founding the human sciences (Geisteswissenschaften). As Gadamer says: tradition does not immediately consist in its own world which cannot be restored anyway. The key is *Erinnerung*, memory as making it inner. "Here Hegel states a definite truth, inasmuch as the essential nature of the historical spirit consists not in the restoration of the past but in *thoughtful mediation with contemporary life*." Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Continuum, 1975), 161.

constituted of the elements of the past offers a basis for any and every individual to determine and legitimize one's own life. Individuals, who possess the right to self-determination are dependent on this world which remains in contact with the past, as the substantial base of their existence and legitimation. This relation with the given, ready-made world is relevant for the individual's own life and self-determination in so far as the *given world offers a firm or potentially firm basis for radically individual practical activities and life conducts, without prescribing or limiting these activities*. Hegel's sharp critique of the various forms of authority doubtless serves to protect the modern individual's right to self-determination.¹⁴⁷

The detachment of normativity from authority is of basic importance in this conception: it serves to protect the autonomy of the practical sphere, the whole world of the individual's actions and self-determination. Although Hegel himself emphasizes that the right to self-determination is a *pure form*, this pure form does not exclude the realization of concrete contents in self-determination: the particular contents of the will and the contingent contents of arbitrary ends. For *contents cannot be prescribed*: there is no authority that could do this. This is exactly what Hegel suggests, in contrast to Kant. Nevertheless, the right of insight and its exercise can lead us to accept and choose the normative contents attached to actuality.

The abstract, pure right and form of self-determination is certainly at odds with the various contents of concrete, individually different motivations and activities. The self-identity of individuals suffers a break in this respect. This break, however, which proceeds from modern subjective freedom and the right to self-determination cannot subsist for long, as Hegel himself asserts that firm principles and solid grounds are essential for human life: the need and end of self-identity is indispensable. However, the creation of solid grounds, or the establishment of self-identity is the task of self-determination and not of authorities: the dual origin and linkage of self-determination, and the detachment of authority from self-determination both point in this direction. The question arises, how the (formal) right to self-determination – the principle and a basic value of modernity – can be transformed into a firm foundation (*feste Grundlage*) and a firm base in life (*fester Boden im Leben*) for everyone, without ignoring the different individual motivations and activities, or the various,

¹⁴⁷ A critique of authority is found in the chapter on the administration of justice in the *Philosophy of Right*. See also chapter C.III.2.3.

equally rightful concrete contents of actions, and without granting authority any space. The task is more complex than just giving modern human beings an opportunity to gain these firm foundations from themselves, as this requirement is already given in the principle, the idea and the basic value of modernity; it is also present in the inner world of moral subjectivity. All of the above do not give an adequate solution. It is beyond doubt, that for Hegel, modern human beings cannot rely solely on substantial powers. The modern world and its objective order- which is not identical to the purely substantial powers of the ancient world – is inclined to determine the foundation of life (*Grundlage im Leben*) purely formally, and not substantially, based on tradition.¹⁴⁸ Law is one of the institutions belonging to this objective order. Beyond this order, however, Hegel seeks other possibilities to stabilize the life of individuals, i.e., of every single individual. In his view, *law is an important, but in itself insufficient, means to meet the need of stabilization in the various aspects of the lifeworld*. The discussion of the right of objectivity has clearly shown that, for Hegel, teleologically rational and functional normativity is gravely problematic,¹⁴⁹ as is the distinction between subjective, objective, and substantial values.

The *forms of mediation* between individuals and the existing world – including the objective order and the institutional world of modern ethical life – are certainly available as the solution of the basic problem of modernity. The legal system, however, is not the main means: Hegel has already expressed his discontent in this respect when discussing the right of objectivity,¹⁵⁰ since acts of mediation are linked to the activities of individuals, and not to institutions.

Let us not forget that the Faustian nature of the European spirit has affected Hegel as well. Although most forms of mediation may be institutional, they are also connected to activities, and thus become integrated in the whole spectrum of practices: individuals interiorize certain elements of these institutions, e.g., by obtaining legal consciousness and legal culture through education. The modern legal system as an institutional

¹⁴⁸ The “objective order” of the institutions is not identical with the substantial. In modernity, we can no longer take it for granted that the system of institutions (law, marriage, family, constitution, administration of justice) integrates substantial contents. The institutional order of modernity supposes the individuals’ insight, approval, and choice as well, which follows from the principle of subjective freedom and the right to self-determination. The mediating role of socio-cultural forms (e.g. education and legal culture) is also involved in the integration of substantial contents.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. chapter A.I.5.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. See also chapter B.II.2.3.

structure incorporates individual legal consciousness and culture as well: it can – or should – be operated through individuals.¹⁵¹

The *universal*, abstract perspective of the *normativity of the right to self-determination* is thus supplemented and realized by the *particular practicality and practicability* (*Praktizität und Praktizierbarkeit*) of concrete activities. From now on, we can interpret and concretize the abstract normativity of the right to self-determination in relations to concrete, socio-culturally contextualized forms of mediation (the concrete legal system of a state, and the legal culture of its citizens). The universal norm thus has concrete content and non-arbitrary subjective value: an interiorized, concrete-particular norm transformed into the inner world. In this framework, we also have the opportunity to include *ethical contents* into individually motivated and shaped practical acts. Ethical, however, as the idea and universal norm of the good life, is not just handed down in tradition: it can only obtain its liveliness and its *stabilizing function* in the individuals' *own, particular, personal lives* through the aforesaid detours and mediating forms (e.g. interiorization by education). These contents (the idea of the good life, or the good as such) can be derived from ethical life as a substantial-normative sphere. Nonetheless, these contents only develop into concrete, particular motivations and contents of actions in concrete acts, in connection with particular individuals and lifeworlds, the good life that the Self – the individuals themselves – envisage, determine and live in most of their practices. Thus the given, traditional normativity of ethical contents is not lost, but transformed: it is no longer a principled, or historical (Aristotelian) normativity, but a multi-form, living normativity embedded in a multitude of particular practices and lifeworlds. One version of this kind of normativity is what Hegel emphasizes as *welfare*.¹⁵²

Therefore, we do not have to give up the possibility of particular, individualized motivations and practices in the Hegelian conception of modernity. *The universality of ethical contents and the particularity of activities are connected in the dual perspective of normativity and practicality, in Hegel's suggestion.* The vitality of this connection is justified by the *acts of interiorization* of the forms of mediation (education, educated consciousness), institutional and normative systems (abstract law, elements of the legal system and administration of justice, the idea of the good). We see such forms of the interiorization of substantial contents as legal consciousness and

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Cf. chapter B.I. 3.2.

culture, or educated consciousness, the establishment and interiorization of which is an important element in the education of citizens; or the representation of the good life *for me*, the development and execution of which takes place in the concrete-particular lifeworld of the individual.

The *state* is a good example to highlight Hegel's opinion on the significance of subjective freedom and the right of self-determination and their connection with the concept of particularity. In the state, where the power of the substantial comes to the fore, substantial will does not act alone: monarchy only gives the finishing touch. For modern individuals, the substantial is only achievable through mediation, through connecting to subjective freedom, not as it happened in the case of Antigone and Creon.

Traditional substantiality finds its counterpoint in modernity in the values of subjective freedom and rationality. In this world, substantial values are only valid and realizable in so far as they are realized by the acts of mediation of individual knowledge and of the will in its pursuit of particular ends.¹⁵³ The destiny of individuals to *lead a universal life* which Hegel attributes to every citizen in the state, is *no longer conceivable without the affirmation of the individual's particularity*. Normativity is not just an important factor influencing the contents of individuals' actions, but their relation also works the other way round: affirmation is a legitimizing function that individuals can exercise on substantial norms. Hegel emphasizes here as well that ethical life mediated this way offers a firm reference point for the individual's lifeworld dispersing in modernity. The core of the Hegelian alternative is exactly the connection of the universal ethical and the particular, and the *relation* resulting from it: their further particular satisfaction, activity, and mode of conduct have this substantial and universally valid basis as their point of departure and result.¹⁵⁴ The universal, the substantial is not just a point of orientation for practices, but a result achieved and affirmed in particular practices. Thus not only ethical life as substantiality gains importance in modernity in regard of shaping the individuals' lifeworlds – the establishment and operation of the particular existence – but there is an opposite connection: the multi-form particular lifeworld of the individuals becomes integrated in ethical life as the mediated existence of the substantial. This structure, however refers to the transformation of ancient ethics. The ancient idea of the

¹⁵³ R, 276 (§ 258).

¹⁵⁴ R, 276 (§ 258).

good is now supplemented by the *good life conduct* of modern, free, self-determining individuals as an equal element of this conceptual constellation: in other words, the road to the good leads through the many-colored world of particular, worldly existences, which incorporates evil as well.¹⁵⁵ Just as in the case of the legal system of modern society, the assertion of rights is greatly dependent on the legal education of individual citizens, and their actual practice.

The chapter on the state in the *Philosophy of Right* sheds light on the fact that Hegel's contribution to the modern problem of individuality is most clearly visible at the intersections of such dualities as *substantial and subjective, objectivity and subjectivity, the normativity and plasticity of activities, and the relations of objective endowments and self-determination*. We recognize freedom at these intersections not just as the essence of the spirit or as the principle of modernity, but as the determination of every individual's life by him or herself, which proceeds from forming everyone's own conception about the idea and the norm of the good, the relation of good and evil, the world of is and ought, and the practical transformation of all these into particular life. Particular life, on the other hand, justifies and operates valid or presumably valid substantiality and its corresponding traditional norms and the various traditions themselves as its own achievement.

We do not conceive of *freedom* in the modern world as a pure idea, but investigate it in the *practical dimensions* of this world, in its manifold and controversial character. The systematic conceptual complexity of freedom is manifested by the fact that it has three meanings: it can be understood as substance, as actuality, and as subjective will. The first meaning of freedom, i.e. substance lacks contents: freedom is only expressed here in principle, and in a formal way. The second aspect (actuality) treats freedom in the medium of reliability and pacticability: actuality is not just the objectivation of former practices, but a broad territory for present and future activities. This framework opens the possibility of the realization of the ethical-substantial and subjective freedom in their mutual relations. However, it is neither the immediate realization of the substantial, nor the immediate realization of freedom, but a mediated process, taking

¹⁵⁵ R, 275 (§ 257). Evil is a structural element of modernity in the "infinite multiplication" of needs. It manifests itself in the consumer mentality of modern mass society, and its increasing significance. See also Erzsébet Rózsa, "Hegel emberfölfogása és a szükségletek rossz végtelensége," *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 5–6 (1985), 683–693.

place between substantial contents and individually determined, particular motivations and activities. It makes clear, why Hegel saw the comprehensive, mobilizing instance of the whole structure in the third element, subjective will. Here, we view both substantial and subjective freedom from the perspective of subjective will, i.e. from the viewpoint of the individual's self-determination as the basic right of modernity, without losing the potential of freedom conceived as an idea and a principle, while relating it to concrete actions of concrete individuals.

In *freedom as substance*, we emphasize the *normative* aspect in relation to ethical life: freedom is not something negative in life, but a positive and good thing. *Freedom as actuality* highlights the *objective* (given) character and *presentness* of ethical life, which faces us with the possibility of the assertion of freedom as a value, and its limitations. This aspect raises questions about the possibility of realizing of modern subjective freedom, pointing to the problematic side of the principle and idea of every individual human being's freedom. This insight leads Hegel to the notion of mediation between the spheres, which comes to the fore in the third aspect. *Subjective will* – the third aspect – expresses both the modern principle and idea of subjective freedom, every individual's freedom and its value; while the second aspect of the actuality of freedom: subjective will takes into itself the other two meanings as well. Modern freedom is a value, a good thing, but its realization brings about a number of difficulties, which we all have to face in our own life conduct. Subjective will – the comprehensive concept of self-determining, free modern individual – thus sums up the positive and negative aspects of freedom related to individual life conduct. Subjective will, as the individual's life conduct points beyond *this* particular life: the real essence of the individual as free moral subject is dependent on self-determination in such a way, that *self-determination is inseparable from the present and the actuality of the individual*. This dimension of present actuality is nothing else than the practical-active, individually variable, and at the same time intersubjective world of *ethical life*, which is tied to other individuals and institutions, in a historically and socio-culturally determined and determinable way. From this aspect, we can also notice that *morality* constitutes the *inner center*, *but in no way the totality* of the world and life of modern individuals. We have to keep all this in mind, when we reassess subjective freedom, individual self-determination, particular lifeworlds, and practical activities, i.e., the components of the conception of modern individuality pointing beyond the inner world and supplementing it.

This background helps us to understand why and how particular existence as the modern individual's form of existence can become a constitutive element of modern society, without having to give up the principle of the ancients, namely substantial ethics. In Hegel's view, modernity represents the mutual influence of these two sides, e.g., what he emphasizes in § 258 in regard of union and unification. *Modern ethical life integrates both the idea and principle of subjective freedom, and the multiplicity of concrete practices and particular lifeworlds.* This construction also becomes manifest in the framework of the state. Albeit modern state is on the highest level of ethical life in the medium of the objective spirit, it is not capable of ensuring concrete freedom without the lifeworlds of modern, personal individuals, for the very reason that the *modern state* cannot rely on the ethical principle of the ancients but is based primarily on the *self-consciousness and mediated existence of the individual*. The nature of concrete freedom which has overcome the idea of the state exactly in the modern state, is elucidated by Hegel in § 260:

The state is the actuality of concrete freedom. But *concrete freedom* requires that personal individuality and its particular interests should reach their full *development* and gain *recognition of their right* for itself (within the system of the family and of civil society), and also that they should, on the one hand, *pass over* of their own accord into the interest of the universal, and on the other, knowingly and willingly acknowledge this universal interest even as their own *substantial spirit*, and *actively pursue it* as their *ultimate end*. The effect of this is that the universal does not attain validity or fulfillment without the interest, knowledge, and volition of the particular, and that individuals do not live as private persons merely for these particular interests without at the same time directing their will to a universal end and acting in conscious awareness of this end. The principle of modern states has enormous strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to attain fulfillment in the *self-sufficient extreme* of personal particularity, while at the same time *bringing it back to substantial unity* and so preserving this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.¹⁵⁶

The individual's particular existence unfolding into its lifeworld has its roots in the right to self-determination, which right can be derived from the idea and principle of subjective freedom. However, not this right, principle, and idea constitute the actuality of this world: the individual's lifeworld can be found in the concrete self-determination exercised through practices. What is more, these practices are not merely single, isolated

¹⁵⁶ R, 282 (§ 260).

actions: they are related to each other, and have a mediating role between the various normative and practical dimensions of lifeworlds and spheres of modern society. Thus, practices are the actualizations of personal particularity which at first consists in the particularity of ends and interests. The pursuit of these ends at the same time serves to maintain substantial freedom. The *concrete freedom* of individuals is realized and attains its validity exactly in this two-dimensional, *normative and at the same time concrete-practical*, process.

This central passage of Hegel's theory of the state expresses that he attributes an eminent status to individuals in modernity, and thereby understands the form of ethical life just mentioned – attached to subjectivity and mediated by it – as concrete freedom. *Concrete freedom* is not a mere idea and principle coming from the outside, from other ages and cultures, handed down by tradition, or prescribed by an authority (even legislation). Instead, it presents itself in the medium of a conceptual constellation in which the principle of the modern world, and the concrete shapes of subjectivity are *simultaneously* present. For this freedom is realized through the particular activities of individuals pursuing their own particular ends in the medium of their own lifeworlds. In modernity, *subjectivity maintains substantial unity*. The modern state rests on this subjective foundation, and that is exactly how it gains its *enormous strength*.

This combination of substantial and subjective as the *complementary basic structure of the modern world* also appears in the reflective forms of (*self*)-*consciousness*.¹⁵⁷ Subjective freedom in this respect does not consist solely in the will's pursuit of particular ends but also in individual knowledge and volition as a series of activities and actions.¹⁵⁸ One reflective form of *knowledge* is *feeling*, which Hegel calls a kind of subjective substantiality. The transformation of the substantial to the subjective, and the transformation of the subjective to something stable and enduring takes place in this respect through feeling, as the form of the internal. This is what makes *freedom the essence, end, and product of the said individual*

¹⁵⁷ The complementary model of Moyer has a partially different meaning. He treats the ethical life of the *Philosophy of Right* primarily as a sphere of institutions, taking little notice of the fact that the institutions themselves are based on the idea of modern freedom. Cf. Dean Moyer, "Die Verwirklichung meiner Autorität," 241. – The present work argues that the authority of the subject is much more important for the *Philosophy of Right*. This authority is not rooted in logical structures which are independent from the social contexts of spirit as culture and individual lifeworld: on the contrary, it is to be found in the latter, the internal components of the *Philosophy of Right*.

¹⁵⁸ R, 277 (§ 258).

activities.¹⁵⁹ Feeling therefore cannot be viewed solely as an epistemological formation: it is also a component of the inner world and thereby the lifeworld of modern individuals. It has an internal connection with the inner world which is a basic element of modern, particular lifeworld. Feeling is of course an immediately, individually determined form of knowledge contextualized in the particular lifeworld. On the contrary, *education* (*Bildung*) is a form of knowledge that is socio-culturally shaped and can be acquired as such. In an epistemological sense, it is connected to thought and reason, and not to feeling or sentiment. In a contentual-normative respect, education belongs to ethical life and its elements: social, economical and political structures.¹⁶⁰ These forms of knowledge – feeling and education, each in their own ways – help individuals to *integrate* into the structures of modern society, and build the relevant elements of these structures into their *own* knowledge and world. Mainly in order to realize their particular ends, fulfilling their right to self-determination and their own worlds.¹⁶¹

These forms of cognition and knowledge are of crucial importance for the actual development of individuals, which is elucidated by Hegel in the field of morality. The development of self-determination is a transformational process in another sense, as the *Self's adoption of various shapes*. In morality, which supersedes abstract law, the abstract person determines itself as subjectivity.¹⁶² Through the transformation of the abstract person to subjectivity, *the world belonging to it also changes*: a higher ground has thereby been determined for freedom; the Idea's aspect of *existence*, its real moment, is now the *subjectivity* of the will.¹⁶³ The higher ground of freedom is now existence whose real moment is the subjectivity of the will: this subjectivity is now capable of establishing and maintaining itself – and its world – by practical activities. It is no mere existence, or the mere being of the individual as subject, which is only in connection with the world of things, but a *proper determination* (*seine eigene Bestimmung*), which is only achievable in one's *own world*. The pivotal point that marks the moral point of view is not existence in itself, but existence

¹⁵⁹ R, 275 (§ 257).

¹⁶⁰ R, 273–274 (§ 256).

¹⁶¹ Here we face again the worldliness of modernity as the context of lifeworlds. Hegel also calls our attention to the historical dimension of modern individuals' lifeworlds when he refers to the Protestant idea of "actual spirit," a standard of the idea and right of freedom.

¹⁶² R, 135 (§ 105).

¹⁶³ R, 135 (§ 106).

determining itself and determined by itself as proper world.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, we do not face here the abstract right of the subjective will, but *the right of self-determination which has been transformed into existence, and the realization of this right*. In this perspective, the existence of the individuals is no longer an abstract existence, their world is no longer an external, material world given in advance, as in the case of abstract law, but their *own existence and own world*. The adequate shape of this individual existence on the moral point of view is the *inner world*. This inner world is the forerunner of the lifeworld of concrete-particular persons which emerges at the points of intersection of the family and the civil society.

The foundation (Grundlage) of the inner world in the moral point of view as an individual form of existence is subjective freedom, which – at this level – means that the individuals *posit everything as their own*, although still only *inwardly*. Self-determining individuals thus *go beyond the legal character of subjective freedom* thematized in abstract law: they do not relate to things, but to themselves. As Hegel emphasizes: although law is valid, my intention (Absicht), end, resolution (Vorsatz), or conscience are more important, as they transcend the formal and general determinations of the legal person and the corresponding material world. The change in perspective results in viewing the subject as free human being who has proper ends, intentions, ideas of the good life (welfare), and who can judge all these at the forum of conscience. Moral subjectivity comprehends and determines everything as its own. This *subjective free consciousness* is the pivotal point (Wendepunkt) of modernity: *it is the modern individual who is capable of positing, representing and thinking the world as one's own, capable of creating and controlling it*. In this world, everything seems to be *individually shaped*: that is why it can become the particular existence, the peculiar lifeworld of the single – every single – individual.¹⁶⁵

Hegel was aware of both the positive and the negative side of this process. The negative side consists in the fact, that in a world based on subjective freedom, freedom has a *formal* character; in addition, all elements of self-orientation are arbitrary and *contingent*. These are unavoidable features of modern freedom. At the same time, however, he viewed subjective freedom as a great historical achievement which not only makes the life of

¹⁶⁴ R, 136 (§ 107).

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Hegel's remark to § 105 in the manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 203.

the modern human being more troublesome and difficult, but enriches it as well. This context reveals why Hegel distinguished between *particular as such* and *particular as the concrete form of freedom*. The particularity of ends and actions obtains a new dimension in the medium of morality, which is not the same as being arbitrary or contingent. The emphasis in this second particularity is laid on the fact that *content is something internal, determined by me, and manifesting my freedom*.¹⁶⁶ Hegel of course does not question the particularity of particularity, only adds a few shades to it. The complex and controversial character of the particular is summed up as follows:

The *particular* aspect of the action is its *inner* content, (a) i.e. the manner in which its universal character is determined *for me* – this constitutes the *value* of the action and the reason why I consider it valid, i.e. its *intention*; (b) its content, as the *particular* end of my particular and subjective existence, is *welfare*.¹⁶⁷

This passage reveals further aspects of Hegel's theory of individuality, and, as we can see, particularity proves to be of utmost importance once again.

3.2.1. *Life at the Intersections of Welfare and the Good:
From Personal-Particular Existence to the Concrete-Particular Lifeworld
of the Modern Individual*

Thus, since the good must necessarily be actualized through the particular will, and since it is at the same time the latter's substance, it has an *absolute right* as distinct from the abstract right of property and the particular ends of welfare.¹⁶⁸

The right of individuals to their *particularity* is likewise contained in ethical substantiality...¹⁶⁹

Welfare (Wohl) sums up the specific features present in particularity. Particularity is first of all a content of practices, which content derives from my particular existence. The content which is the particular end of my particular existence surfaces in this first particularity. This particular-

¹⁶⁶ Cf. R, 141 (§ 114).

¹⁶⁷ R, 141 (§ 114).

¹⁶⁸ R, 157–158 (§ 130).

¹⁶⁹ R, 197 (§ 154).

ity is ruled by an attitude that makes it difficult – if not impossible – to embed ethical values and contents into motivations. The particularity of actions, however, has another aspect as well: the value of action or the value of individual activities in general, which both derive from the fact that the content is determined *by me*, and in this respect, it is a subjective value. This second particularity expresses the *inner* content of action, which Hegel calls the value of action and conceives it as a manifestation of subjective freedom. This higher order particularity is the appropriate expression of the principle, right, and value of modernity: infinite subjective freedom. The value of action in its relation to particular as internal content is not purely subjective: it is rather subjective-substantial, a normative point of orientation, where the idea of freedom *and* the right of self-determination can be transformed as a universal into the activities and concrete practices of single individuals, without eliminating the at will character of practices, or sacrificing subjective freedom on the altar of particularity. This relation reveals that freedom is no longer a pure idea, not just the basic principle of a newer world, or a right to self-determination, but an *actual* combination in so far as the principle of freedom and the right to self-determination is steeped in the concrete contents and modes of activities; even if activities sometimes resist or refute freedom. From this perspective, i.e., the double origins of modernity, its substantial as well as subjective, value- and norm-oriented character, we are able to recognize both the deficiencies (arising from the particularity of practices) and the blessings of freedom. In the course of transformation, particularity becomes “*objective particularity*,” which shows that the integration of ethical life is not just a possibility, but a requirement: *a structural element of motivations and practices*. The division between the first and second type of particularity shows why we can assign a stabilizing function to the latter in regard of practices and the lifeworld, which is unimaginable in the case of the former, due to its inarticulate multiplicity and divergence. The conceptuality of practices, the distinction of subjective and objective particularity, the aspects of subjective value and normativity with regard to actions in the relation of particularity all point to the ambiguous nature of modern freedom. It all becomes clear from the viewpoint of the Hegelian system’s “*theory of concept*,” which itself has a dual perspective: one being *logical-conceptual*, the other *spirit-conceptual*.

In this regard, Hegel considers his own solution as different from those of Kant and Fichte. He distinguishes between two dimensions of contentual determinations of actions (or activities in general), and in this he is

at least partly reliant on Kant, as he also views the first form of particularity with critique, which is obvious from his discussion of welfare. Nevertheless, it would be misleading to interpret Hegel without taking note of the distinction between the first and second kind of particularity. This distinction has further consequences for the treatment of welfare (Wohl) and the good (das Gute). *Welfare is content* in so far as it is the particular end of my particular existence (als *mein besonderer Zweck* meines partikulären Daseins). Welfare has two aspects: 1. the determined, particular end of this or that individual, and 2. welfare taken in a general sense. Hegel equals welfare with happiness (Wohl oder Glückseligkeit) both in the *Encyclopedia* and the *Philosophy of Right*.¹⁷⁰ The first aspect of welfare and its relation to happiness is connected with the motivational structure discussed in the subjective spirit, the first type of practical motivations: i.e. the subjective and natural motivations combined in happiness motivation. The second aspect of welfare, welfare in general, signifies an empirically universal and at the same time normative right, namely, that the welfare of every individual must be realized.¹⁷¹ This claim proves that in the early decades of the 19th century, Hegel was already perfectly aware that welfare would be a central element in the basic structures of modern social and economic systems.¹⁷² This deep insight into the development of the modern world contributed to the fact that Hegel's opinion differs from that of Kant in regard of the relation between happiness and freedom. The difference is not accidental: for Hegel accepted this future direction of modern society, the predominance of welfare over the traditional idea of the good, and the strengthening of the claim to the realization of welfare as a normative factor, which would have a far-reaching effect on actions and motivations. This insight is in correlation with the Hegelian reception of British economics, which we have already referred to.¹⁷³ Thus, it is not only important with regard to Hegel's relation to Kant, but it is also a crucial point of his theory of modernity.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. R, 150 (§ 123).

¹⁷¹ See Hegel's manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 212 (§ 113).

¹⁷² Hegel treats welfare as a structural element of the "sub-systems" of modern economy and society, discussing it in three stages accordingly. He introduces it in morality, in tight connection with happiness-motivations; it reappears again in civil society, the sphere of concrete, free individuals with particular needs, expressed by the system of needs; and finally, in the framework of the state, in so far as the modern state has a certain welfare function as well.

¹⁷³ See also Manfred Riedel, *Studien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (1969), Birger P. Priddat, *Hegel als Ökonom* (1990), Erzsébet Rózsa, *Hegel gazdaságfilozófija* (1993).

However, the normativity of welfare in general is not the same as the normativity of the good. In this relation, the good (das Gute) has a universal-normative value, while the value of welfare (Wohl) is only subjective. It is nevertheless a value. Welfare has a subjective value in connection with objective particularity which should not be underestimated. Although its normativity is of lesser authority than the idea of the good and its substantial normativity, it is not separated from the latter: it joins to the good as substantial normativity through its subjective *value*. This structure of values and norms has an action-theoretical significance as well.¹⁷⁴ The value of actions is subject-dependent, not substance-dependent, as the good which serves as the objective and substantial standard of subject-dependent actions. However, action and its end, the basic orientation of welfare is not evaluation, but realization: this is what becomes manifest in realized welfare. The separation of normativity and realization appears inside welfare as well: welfare in general as the simple form of universality is in no immediate connection with determinate, particular welfare. And welfare is simple because it is not substantial, but functional.

However, universality in form is supplemented by a mediating function, i.e., to incorporate the varied content of the action in general.¹⁷⁵ Varied content which is the particularity of the subject and a subjective particularity, becomes the subject's *own* content mediated by ends. The content made someone's own through the normativity of the universal form and its mediation is the very soul and determinant of the action. The combination of the two levels of welfare brings about the transformation of immediate particularity to a higher-order particularity: in actions, the first and second aspect of welfare, its practical and normative, subjective and substantial value-dimensions become engaged. In other words, although substantial normativity is pushed to the background in the modern type of action, it does not completely disappear: it is preserved as the form of universality, and helps to arrange the varied content of actions in a way that is not based solely on subjective values. Particularity as the combination of the first aspect of welfare and the first form particularity attains a higher-order, universal form of motivations and practices, which form also affects the content and its novel arrangement. This is achieved in the

¹⁷⁴ In the manuscript notes, Hegel distinguishes between the value of a thing and an action: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 213 (§ 114).

¹⁷⁵ R, 149 (§ 121).

constellation between the second aspect of welfare and the second form of particularity.

This multiple transformation process sheds light on further moments of the relation of the good and welfare. Good as a mere idea cannot be asserted. The particular welfare of individuals possessing particular existence is needed to realize the good. The realization of the good in the medium of welfare is possible in the particular activities of individuals as actual human beings, which means the very soul and the determinant of the action. This insight of Hegel is not a mere hypothesis, as it is founded on an in-depth analysis of the social and economic structure of the modern world and the principle of subjectivity.

Hegel's views on *practices* can only be reconstructed in an authentically Hegelian sense before the background of this complex theory. The normative aspects of this theory include the right of the subject of modernity as the right to find *satisfaction*.¹⁷⁶ It is remarkable that satisfaction does not first appear in connection with particular motivations, needs, and ends, or immediately as the component and form of practices, but attached to the right and value of particularity as universal normativity. Hegel thus lays stress on the foundation and justification of empirical-concrete satisfactions by corresponding rights, norms, and values. Hegel thereby prefers the right of the subject to find its satisfaction in the action to the empirically concrete satisfaction of concrete needs.¹⁷⁷ This sequence is all the more remarkable, as he attributes an outstanding role to concrete needs and their satisfaction in the chapter on *The System of Needs*. However, moral point of view, as the specific perspective of moral subjectivity, assumes other priorities: it focuses on the right of subjectivity as such. The topic of satisfaction lays emphasis on the *foundation and justification* of the subject's right to find its satisfaction in the action. In this context, the *satisfaction* of the subject's rights becomes an *essential aspect and component of the Hegelian theory of the modern individual*.

When emphasizing the subject's *right* to find satisfaction in the action, Hegel treats the normative character of the individuals subjective satisfaction in relation to welfare as one whole. The decisive element in this right is that we do not recognize only the welfare of single individuals in themselves, but the *welfare of others* as well. It is exactly in this

¹⁷⁶ R, 149 (§ 121). Brandom presents the mechanism of satisfaction in a threefold structure of erotic consciousness (hunger/desire as attitude, food/object as meaning, eating as activity). See "Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution," 54–55.

¹⁷⁷ R, 149 (§ 121).

intersubjective dimension that the subject's right to find satisfaction in the action becomes apparent. This structure in turn includes the empirically concrete and individually variable aspects of particularity, which reveal the import and the deficit of welfare as well. It also means that the Kantian problem of *heteronomy and autonomy* resurface in Hegel's discussion of the motivations (and execution) of actions. He actually refers to Kant, saying that abstract subjectivity emerging in morality is in part the same as Kantian practical reason. Hegel thinks it important to emphasize his reliance on Kant in this respect, when he acknowledges the Kantian point of view in explicating the subjective satisfaction of the individual.¹⁷⁸ For Hegel, however, this subjectivity is *concrete*: it determines itself, it is particular in itself, and this particularity consists in the elements of particular welfare, i.e., particular needs and their satisfaction, as well as the particular welfare of the particular individual.

In the background of the individual's subjective satisfaction, we find Hegel's normative distinction between worthless and worthy actions and activities. This points to the fact that the value of an action is not determined by its content as such; content is neutral in so far as it can express both the worthless and the worthy. The value of an action can be measured only in its *whole* context: the standard of the right relation in the whole is maintained here as well. This whole contains two points of general orientation and the constellation thereof: the subject's right to self-determination and the norm of substantiality. A sound judgment about the worthy or worthless character of an action should be based on the mutual reference of the two. This is how value as the character of the action *and* as the concrete quality of this action is produced.¹⁷⁹ The value of an action (or the lack of it) does not primarily depend on norms given in advance. When judging actions in modernity, pure substantial normativity is inevitably pushed to the background, according to Hegel. It follows from the right to self-determination that every action should be valued in itself as well; this is characteristic of the modern type of action. The value of a given – any given – action can only be determined through the examination of a long series of actions. This series, however, refers to a specific totality, as it reveals the nature or character of the acting individual: what the subject *is*, *is the series of its actions*. If these are a

¹⁷⁸ R, 151 (§ 124).

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Hegel's manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 234 (§ 124).

series of worthless productions, then the subjectivity of volition is likewise worthless; and conversely, if the series of the individual's deeds are of a substantial nature, then so – is his inner will.¹⁸⁰

The evaluation of actions takes into consideration that the individual's action always points beyond itself. Abstract Self is the locus where natural will appears in the first place (cf. the happiness-motivation treated in the subjective spirit). This, however, becomes a universal end, i.e., the *universal* end of welfare and happiness, through elements and motions leading further.¹⁸¹ This is how natural, subjective existence which includes instincts, needs, passions – summed up in the subjective spirit as happiness motivations – combine with welfare as realized happiness mediated by the right to satisfaction in the framework of the objective spirit. This second level of happiness obviously points and steps beyond the first, merely natural character of the Self's existence. Subjectivity with its particular content of welfare¹⁸² now becomes central: this however, is not to be understood as exactly *this* particular content of welfare in itself, but in its relation to the universal.

This is the context where the intersubjective aspect of welfare steps in as a practical cooperative moment and as a substantial-normative feature. Welfare includes the welfare of others, even the welfare of all – as Hegel states.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, he holds that this determination is wholly empty in itself, while emphasizing the intersubjectivity of welfare, which is also essential. The welfare of many other particular beings in general is thus also an essential end and right of subjectivity.¹⁸⁴ Intersubjectivity as an essential end and right expresses the substantial-normative character of welfare, assuming at the same time – albeit in a latent way – the willingness of practical cooperation derived from the claim to realization and the right to satisfaction. The willingness to cooperate hidden in intersubjectivity will be unfolded by Hegel in the system of the satisfaction of needs, in the framework of civil society.¹⁸⁵ In the perspective of morality, intersubjectivity remains primarily normative: so to speak, we declare that the welfare of many other particular beings in general is the essential end and right of subjectivity.

¹⁸⁰ R, 151 (§ 124).

¹⁸¹ R, 150 (§ 123).

¹⁸² R, 153 (§ 123).

¹⁸³ R, 153 (§ 123).

¹⁸⁴ R, 153 (§ 123).

¹⁸⁵ See also the second principle of civil society: R, 220–224 (§§ 182–186).

Although welfare includes intersubjectivity, it is not as yet a conscious cooperation, but is seen from an egocentric, self-interested point of view: as the element and condition of my welfare. My welfare broadens by itself into the welfare of others, as my welfare cannot subsist without the welfare of others, as Hegel says.¹⁸⁶ The welfare of others is a manifestation of my self-centered attitude, since this welfare is not determined in itself as an absolute end for me. The intersubjective aspect of the welfare of others reveals a self-interested motivation: first of all, I have to take care of my own welfare, as others take care of their own. Here, self-centered attitude does not derive from the right to self-determination of moral subjectivity. It has another, practical cause: namely, that welfare is determined first by the particular, what is mine and is therefore arbitrary: it is everyone's own business, where one places one's own welfare, says Hegel. This creates a division: welfare as particular content becomes opposed to the universal right to self-determination and the right to satisfaction that originates in it. The division between these rights and the content can lead to the violation of the *right to particular welfare*.¹⁸⁷ This division can only be overcome in ethical life, where the intersubjective dimension – the forms of conscious cooperation, e.g., the division of labor, mutual recognition, solidarity, responsibility – becomes an internal structural element of particular existence as fully-developed particular-concrete lifeworld. Hegel refers to this transformation in ethical life when he says that the great interests of the human being, its real relation is in the sphere of ethical life. From this perspective we can now see what Hegel means when he says that welfare is “not the best of the human being.”¹⁸⁸

He still holds, however, that although the more significant things in life belong to ethical, universal life, *welfare is life as well: the reality of the personality*. The content of welfare is connected to life, the reality of the personality. Welfare in its relation to the reality of the personality, as well as the normativity that stands behind it, the right to particularity, the right to satisfaction, constitute the *subjective-personal* aspects of freedom in modernity. This can be reconstructed in the perspective of moral subjectivity. It is from this perspective that we can understand the *personal*

¹⁸⁶ “Mein Wohl erweitert sich von selbst sogleich zum Wohl Anderer, da mein Wohl nicht bestehen kann ohne das Wohl Anderer” – as Hegel says in his manuscript notes. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 237 (§ 126).

¹⁸⁷ *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 239.

¹⁸⁸ “Mit Wohl – Bestes – sind wir in ein ganz ruhiges, gleichsam privat-bürgerliches Verhältnis /geraten/ – nicht das Beste eines Menschen, d.i. das seiner Bestimmung, Gemäße.” *Ibid.*

life-determinations arising in the above concepts and their constellations, the structural frames and elements of the lives of individuals as persons. As Hegel puts it in § 127 of the *Philosophy of Right*: the *particularity* of the interests of the natural will, taken together as a simple *totality*, is personal existence as *life*.¹⁸⁹ Hegel makes it explicit, that in modernity, life can no longer be reduced to ethical, universal life, as it includes *personal* existence based on particularity as the right of individuals as well. Ethical life and personal existence linked to particularity are two different, albeit closely interconnected aspects of individual life in modernity.

In the notes to the *Philosophy of Right* we find a statement which says that life has a real right in contrast to formal right as it contains an absolute element. This *real right of life* has its origins in the whole, in the *totality of its particularity*. The quality and value of the individual's existence consists in *welfare fully developed* in the totality of their particularity. Life understood as such is on the one hand the infinite mode of reality; on the other, it is the real side of personality itself.¹⁹⁰ Fully-developed welfare and personal life are two sides of the same coin: subjective-personal and objective-normative, institutionalized and cooperative life.

The "*existence of the particular person*" as the first form of existence of the Self has been determined into the combination of these two forms (fully-developed welfare and personal life). This is an important step in the transformation of abstract particular existence into concrete lifeworld. This constellation of subjectivity-dimensions and reality-aspects makes it possible to conceive of *life as the existence of subjective freedom*, and not just as an idea or right, as Hegel says in § 128 of the *Philosophy of Right*. The firm, universal existence of personality is also guaranteed, as the right to existence in particular will is established in the legal-normative forms of morality based on subjective freedom. The aforementioned division of welfare and the right to life can thus be eliminated in fully-developed welfare, i.e., the reality of the personality. As Hegel would say, the still widely disputed questions concerning the right to life cannot be answered on the basis of abstract liberties; it is only the *reality* of welfare that can justify or reject any claim to these liberties. The Hegelian sense of reality is detectable here once again. As the following passage states:

¹⁸⁹ R, 154 (§ 127).

¹⁹⁰ *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 240 (§ 127).

Right has already (see § 106) determined its *existence* as the particular will; and subjectivity, in its comprehensive particularity, is itself the existence of freedom (see § 127), just as it is in itself, as the infinite self-reference of the will, the universal aspect of freedom.¹⁹¹

It is not this or that particularity, but the *comprehensive particularity* of the individual that provides us with a conceptual shape to express the existence of freedom in an adequate manner. Not the existence of the particular freedom of this or that individual, but of freedom in a universal, normative-legal and normative-ethical dimension, which serves to legitimize *this personal life*, this fully-developed welfare as the *reality of the personality*.

In the perspective of morality, Hegel presents *particular subjectivity as a logical-conceptual and spirit-philosophical constellation*, as the model of modern individuality. In this model, subjectivity shows itself in its comprehensive particularity combining in itself both the *personal-individual* existence of freedom (personal existence reality of the personality particular welfare), and the *universality* of freedom (right to self-determination, right to particularity, right to satisfaction, or in a broader sense right as a universal form, ethical life as a higher-order content and normativity). Particularity as simple totality is the form of individual existence that Hegel describes as personal existence as life. This form of life also reveals the existence of freedom: *personal existence is welfare, the reality of the personality and at the same time freedom, the realization of subjective freedom that has become personal*.

Subjectivity in its comprehensive particularity contains the existence of freedom not only in a logical-categorical sense, but also in relation to the concrete-particular lifeworlds in the context of the spirit. In this complex medium, freedom is not a mere idea, right, or principle, but becomes an existing reality and the real side of the personality. Subjective freedom as the principle of modernity goes through multiple transformations and becomes actual reality, an existence unfolding in the practical constellations of the modern individual's cognitive, self-reflective position and their practical, self-determinant attitude; potentially in every individual's own personal existence and concrete-particular lifeworld.

We reflect on these dimensions of freedom through subjective and objective cognitive forms (feeling, sentiment, conscience, representation

¹⁹¹ R, 155 (§ 128).

etc.; education as the socialized form of instinctive reason). These forms are accessible for every single individual. We also connect the universality of freedom to the good by ways of epistemic forms, which is a precondition of transforming the idea of freedom into actuality as personal existence.¹⁹² This is brought about now by *conscience*, a higher-order, subjective-normative epistemic form that is capable of connecting personal existence to subjective freedom in everyone's and anyone's life. Conscience is a form of consciousness: an infinite and inwardly knowing subjectivity which determines its own content within itself.¹⁹³ (Conscience as a form of consciousness has its origins in self-reflection and the inner self-determination derived from it, although not in a general sense, but in reference to the individual's particularity as personal existence.) In his notes to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel describes conscience as a thinking particularity which knows and determines ends and not as a merely receptive capacity.¹⁹⁴ Through its connection to particularity, conscience can also relate to the kind of life determined as personal existence in morality. Conscience is an expression of the individual's ability to determine the content of their own activities, even if this determination takes place in their own *inner world*. But that is exactly why it can and will be *personal*. The basis of this internal determination is the personal Self, personal existence which results from the explication of particular existence from the abstract Self.

Life, however, when rising above its immediate natural and arbitrary-subjective character, becomes not only personal, but a *right* as well. Life is no longer something given, an immediate natural endowment or a merely personal existence. Personal existence in itself is reliant on firm foundations and guarantees. The introduction of the right to life is an important step for this very reason. And conversely: right has to possess life in

¹⁹² In the chapter on morality, Hegel treats good with reference to evil in individual consciousness as well. Investigating the relation between evil and particularity, he states that the origin of evil is the "mystery of freedom": it necessarily leaves the natural state of the will, and becomes inward in opposition to this. It is this internal contradiction of the will that is particular, and is determined as evil. See R, 167–170 (§ 139). It is in fact "subjectivity, in its comprehensive particularity" that is "itself the existence of freedom" – which means that it is essentially capable of superseding, transcending, or neglecting evil. R, 155 (§ 128).

¹⁹³ R, 155–156 (§ 128).

¹⁹⁴ "Zwecke wissende, bestimmende, denkende Besonderheit", i.e. "nicht empfangenes" – as Hegel writes in the manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 242 (§ 128).

order to become an actual right.¹⁹⁵ The right of necessity which arises in the extreme danger of life, or in the infinite injury to existence is not the same as fairness and can override even the claim to rightful property. It is a right, in which Hegel recognizes the welfare functions of modern society. As he remarks: from the right of necessity arises the benefit of competence, whereby a debtor is permitted to retain his tools, agricultural implements, clothes, and in general as much of his resources – i.e., of the property of his creditors – as is deemed necessary to support him, even in his accustomed station in society.¹⁹⁶ In his notes to the *Philosophy of Right*, he also states that right must have a life: welfare has to rise to the level of universality as the right to life. *But only the life that a person has is a right.*¹⁹⁷

Thereby life as particular subjectivity or personal existence, and the reality of the person become interconnected with right as the universality of the will. At the same time, Hegel deems the validity of right justifiable only through the life of the person. Conscience, as the singularity of the will in a formal sense, and right as the universality of the will, both in their different relations to life (personal-inner and universal) set the framework in which the contingency of particular individuals' particular ends, and the particular contents of their actions can be surmounted. This is how particularity as the right and subjective value of modern individuality finds its place. This is how particularity becomes *concrete*: no longer just a right to particularity, but a "*fully-developed welfare* transforming particular life as immediate welfare. This is the *reality of the personality*: particular existence enriched by personal existence and fully-developed welfare. In the subjective-personal existence of the personality (subjektive Dasein der Persönlichkeit) its particularity and universality are both asserted. One's own universality (eigene Allgemeinheit) means that modern personality can posit and achieve the good (das Gute) in happiness, welfare and life (Glückseligkeit, Wohl und Leben) as a *universal* end of its *own* particular life. We have also seen that the good as the higher ground of life is not to be understood in an Aristotelian sense. Particular subject, while adsorbing the elements of universality – such as every human being's right to

¹⁹⁵ Cf. R, 154–155 (§ 127).

¹⁹⁶ R, 155 (§ 127).

¹⁹⁷ "Recht – muß Leben haben – Wohl zur Allgemeinheit gesteigert – muß sich steigern – eines Denkenden – geht zum Recht über [...] Leben – nur Leben als [das] der *Person* hat, ist ein Recht" – as we read in the manuscript notes to § 128: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 241.

self-determination or the welfare of every single human being – as elements of modern society, maintains or even strengthens its particularity. The integration of the various elements of welfare is secured and canalized by the system of rights. From this viewpoint, we can understand the following remark of Hegel: welfare is not a good without right. Similarly, right is not a good without welfare.¹⁹⁸ *The mutual dependence of right and welfare is a basic structural element of the good in modernity*: neither right, nor welfare can be eliminated from the modern individual's lifeworld. The good can only be represented and exercised through their mediation.

In modernity, welfare includes the person's right to satisfaction deriving from the higher right of self-determination, and realized satisfaction as well. These unite in fully-developed welfare. The mutual dependence of welfare and particular individuals' rights is shown by the fact that welfare has to be adjusted, and the right to welfare has to expand in order that the good can exist at all in modern life. In this conceptual constellation, welfare is no longer characterized by the arbitrariness of ends and actions, because it is joined with normative particularity (right to particularity, right to satisfaction), which lends it a universal character. Particularity realized in welfare makes subjective freedom *personal*, but not in a contingent sense. Subjective freedom as personal existence gets realized in the framework of rights given in the moral perspective as normativity, and at the same time in the self-reflective and self-determinant acts of particular individuals. The good that becomes manifest this way incorporates both rights and welfare as the simple totality of personal existence. Each of these elements is a moment of modern freedom. The good now cannot be reduced to traditional contents, because its reality and validity has a personal character: it can be found and justified in every single individual's *personal existence*. Each of these elements of personal existence and fully-developed welfare is in turn a moment of *modern freedom*, in the framework of *every individual's personal life*. The *personal character, the subjective value* of modern freedom and modern life conduct is one of the basic achievements provided by the moral perspective.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ R, 157 (§ 130).

¹⁹⁹ In § 140, Hegel analyses the perversions (Entartungen) of subjectivity in the context of contemporary debates and authors. "Ironical consciousness" provides the framework for investigating the problem of the "bel esprit," a frequent topic of the philosophy of art: an extreme form of subjectivity as particularity. On ironical consciousness, see the works of Klaus Vieweg, especially "Die freie Seite der Philosophie: Skepsis und Freiheit," in *Die freie Seite der Philosophie: Skeptizismus in Hegelscher Perspektive*, ed. Brady Bowman and Klaus Vieweg, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), 9–26; and "Heiterer Leichtsinn und

The perspective of morality shows why and how the *subjective value* of the action, which aims at satisfaction and at the universal ethical content, becomes a *central issue in the modern world*. Without this subjective value, it would be impossible to unfold objectively particularity the historical background and the structural elements of which reflect religious, ethical, and cultural traditions and customs: the contents and material of practices. Hegel reminds us here that the subjective value of modern freedom has an historical background, which affects the value of the modern lifeworld and the range of the individual's activities:

The right of the subject's particularity to find satisfaction, or – to put it differently – the right of subjective freedom, is the pivotal and focal point in the difference between antiquity and the modern age. This right, in its infinity, is expressed in Christianity, and it has become the universal and actual principle of a new form of the world (zum allgemeinen wirklichen Prinzip einer neuen Form der Welt). Its more specific shapes include love, the romantic, the eternal salvation of the individual as an end, etc.; then there are morality and conscience, followed by the other forms, some of which will come into prominence below as the principle of civil society and as moments of the political constitution, while others appear within history at large, particularly in the history of art, the sciences, and philosophy.²⁰⁰

This remark introduces the historical and socio-cultural *contextualization* of modern individuality, which takes place in the framework of the objective spirit, in the worlds belonging to ethical life.

3.2.2. *Ethical Life: The Socio-Cultural Contextualization of Individuality. Subjective Freedom and the "Objective Order" of Modernity*

The *right of individuals* to their *subjective determination to freedom* is fulfilled in so far as they belong to ethical actuality.²⁰¹

The citation at the end of the preceding chapter shows that Hegel has introduced ethical life in the relations of subjective freedom and the right of

fröhlicher Scharfsinn: Zu Hegels Verständnis von Komik und Humor als Formen ästhetisch-poetischer Skepsis," in *Die geschichtliche Bedeutung der Kunst und die Bestimmung der Künste*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, Lu de Vos, and Bernadette Collenberg-Plotnikov (München: Fink, 2005); or: "Die romantische Ironie als ästhetische Skepsis – Philosophie als ewige Hängepartie," in *Skepsis und Freiheit. Hegel über den Skeptizismus zwischen Philosophie und Literatur*. München: Fink, 2007), 193–213.

²⁰⁰ R, 151–152 (§ 124).

²⁰¹ R, 196 (§ 153).

particularity. The same concepts have already appeared in the perspective of morality. In the introduction of ethical life, however, they refer to the socio-cultural and historical embeddedness of the basic idea of morality on the horizon of modernity. For this very reason, similarly to morality, *the thematic center of ethical life is also modern individuality and its freedom*. This does not necessarily coincide with the architectonic center.²⁰² Ethical life supplements, enriches, and – as we shall see – functionally strengthens the aspects of modern existence rooted in subjective freedom and explicated in morality. It is achieved by their internal connection: here we interpret ethical life as substantial focusing on subjectivity, although its home is morality, i.e., the field of *moral subjectivity*.²⁰³ Hegel's ethical life is not the resuscitation of an old metaphysical idea. We have already seen in the chapter on morality, when we were reconstructing the good, that the elements of the ethical world do not only possess a substantial character, but also constitute the territory of subjective freedom. A further extra meaning is offered by socio-cultural contextualization, as in the framework of modern ethical life, freedom is not only attributed to modern human being as a single individual: modern, subjective freedom also includes aspects of the intersubjective and institutional dimensions of individual life.²⁰⁴ This is why Hegel uses terms like the “*right of objectivity*” and “*objective order*” when describing this sphere.

Hegel did not treat the particular individual's right to satisfaction merely systematically, which I referred to in the perspective of morality, but also as an historical achievement.²⁰⁵ As we have seen, the right of subjective freedom was the pivotal and focal point in the difference between antiquity and the modern age. Hegel repeatedly emphasizes that modern

²⁰² See chapter A.II.

²⁰³ In ethical life, Hegel gives a more detailed and contextualized account of the idea already present in the Preface of the *Phenomenology*: that truth should not be taken as a substance only, but as a subject as well. Cf. P, 10.

²⁰⁴ See also the considerations of Moya, Brandom, and McDowell on the normativity of intersubjective relations and institutions in *Hegels Erbe*. – The Hegelian term of “substantial disposition” expresses this meaning, emphasizing that the substantial disposition of the agricultural estate is not adequate to modern social structures. Forms of production and forms of life (the “mode of subsistence”) undergo a change: dependence on nature lessens, and the primary, pragmatic end becomes that of “provision for the future.” Simultaneously, agriculture loses its sacred character, and is superseded by law, training, and education. Cf. R, 235–236 (§ 203). New forms of knowledge and disposition emerge, although the agricultural estate attempts to preserve its traditional substantial disposition.

²⁰⁵ “The right of the subject's particularity to find satisfaction, or – to put it differently – the right of subjective freedom, is the pivotal and focal point in the difference between antiquity and the modern age.” R, 151 (§ 124).

ethical life is not identical to ancient ethics. In contrast to the unipolar, substantial ethics of antiquity, the ethical life of modernity is a restructured sphere, based on two equally relevant (substantial and subjective) principles. The principles of modern world (subjective freedom and the particularity of the individuals) permeate all spheres of modern society. Not only subjective epistemic forms (representation, faith, emotion) and elements of the inner world important in morality (conscience, feeling) cannot avoid its influence: the same holds for objective-institutional spheres (civil society, political constitution) and concrete lifeworlds of particular individuals. The cohesion of the modern family is not dependent solely on law, or the sanctity of marriage and family, but also on a sense of belonging, a personally accepted, conscious commitment: love. *Personality, as the achievement of morality thus gets steeped in the formations of ethical life.*²⁰⁶

In the light of this, we have to reconsider some of Hegel's underrating remarks on individuality, often misunderstood in the history of reception, and used as evidence to prove that he underestimated or even eliminated individuality. This reconsideration stands in the focus of my work, choosing the complex perspective of Hegel's theory of modernity and his conception of individuality as a point of orientation and an adequate method for reconstruction.²⁰⁷ Ethical life – because of its integrative character – is an especially suitable field of investigation to reconstruct his conception, for it unites *all* aspects of life and social existence. Although the modern individual can be seen as a moment of ethical actuality (Hegel in fact says so), it should not be taken as meaning that the individual is degraded to the level of a mere structural element in modern society. Individuals also benefit from this situation: they get orientations and guarantees for their own life conduct, lifeworlds, or quality of life. This new status of individuals in modernity, which is integrated into the objective order of institutions, customs, and norms, offers a protection for their personal existence and fully-developed welfare which have a good chance to be realized from the perspective of morality. In the fabric of ethical life, they can find their firm foundation and firm standpoint in life (*feste Grundlage, feste*

²⁰⁶ The terms of obligation (*Verpflichtung*) and responsibility express something similar, although in a different context. Brandom introduces these terms in the analysis of self-consciousness, describing the transition from the desires of erotic consciousness to mutual recognition, which gives rise to the "structure of social authority." See Brandom, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution*, 61–77.

²⁰⁷ Cf. chapter A.

Stellung im Leben). And conversely: individuals with their particularity, their personal existence, and fully-developed welfare, i.e., the elements and formations of their lifeworlds, can enrich ethical life, which would be dead without subjective freedom, the self-determination and particularity of individuals.²⁰⁸ Individuals with their varied, articulated lifeworlds and modes of life keep the structures and institutions of modernity alive as a fabric of dynamic and varied structures.

Therefore, we should not speak of degrading or eliminating individuality in *ethical life*, but of adding *further details or nuances to the notion of individuality, broadening it to a fully-fledged theory*. This theory is based on the individual's subjective freedom and right to particularity, and is in close connection with Hegel's clear-sighted account of the modern world. The further elaboration of the conception of individuality in the socio-cultural context of ethical life is reinforced by the aspects and elements of modern freedom explored in the perspective of morality, which form the core of this conception. The existence of the freedom of individuals is itself good: this is the element of ethical life in morality. This good includes the *welfare* of the individual's particular existence, as well as the *right* to satisfaction. These are the moral elements. Subjective freedom's *higher level of integration* is ethical life, which is of crucial importance from the viewpoint of the good in morality (das Gute im Moralischen), or the higher value of free individuality, as the *actual* possibility of realizing the good is to be found in ethical life. Not only as a content of actions, which Hegel has emphasized in morality, but as an objective guarantee of realizing subjective freedom in the lives of single individuals.²⁰⁹ The embeddedness of immediate actuality of subjective freedom (the individual's lifeworld) in the intersubjective and institutional dimensions of modern society (the objective order of institutions, customs, and norms) offers individuals a firm base for life, without giving up their right to particularity and its realization through personal existence and welfare in their own life conduct.

²⁰⁸ Cf. Hegel's meditations on the liberation of the principle of subjectivity in the modern state. R, 282 (§ 260).

²⁰⁹ Hegel conceives of the good as a structure on this manifoldly articulated interpretive horizon. R, 185–186 (§ 141). On the categorical-systematical arrangement of the good, see Ludwig Siep, "Die Wirklichkeit des Guten in Hegels Lehre von der Idee," in *Hegels Erbe*, 351–367. – The present work takes the good in a similar sense: the good is "the rational order of the social and natural world" and its "operation and consciousness in the individual subject." Ibid., 364.

Personal existence as the shape of individual life given in the perspective of morality does not possess a firm base in itself. It is the embeddedness in ethical life that gives personal existence, the reality of the personality (i.e., welfare) an opportunity to attain a shape that is built on an *actual, firm foundation*.²¹⁰ In Hegel's words, ethical life takes up the task of realizing the idea as actual life.²¹¹ Again, actuality in this context does not refer to something given, but to the *realization of the subjective freedom* of the modern human being. Freedom in ethical life is not simply a personal existence rooted in the inner world. Although it is the mode of my existence (Weise meines Daseins), that is to say *mine, and thereby personal*, it is at the same time living and actual which exists as the unity of the internal and the external (Einheit des Inneren und Äußeren). The *good*, having been discussed in the medium of morality, now resurfaces in ethical life, *in the perspective of actuality as the realization of subjective freedom, not as an idea or substantial principle of the good*. In Hegel's words: the good is lifeless without subjectivity.²¹² The idea of the good belonging to ethical life would be lifeless without moral subjectivity, its personal existence and freedom. Therefore, in modernity, the good cannot be understood in a traditional ethical sense: without the principle of subjective freedom and its realization, which stands in the focus of modernity, the idea of the good and its substantial value principles would be lifeless. This is how ethical life becomes the actuality of modern freedom: it recognizes the eminent status that individuality has in morality, without underestimating it in ethical life either.

The objective order of ethical life, and the free, self-determinant character of individuals are dependent on each other. Ethical life is just as dependent on the particularity of individuals – without which it would be

²¹⁰ The central category of actuality has multiple meanings in Hegel. In the present investigation, the term is in close connection with ethical life. First, it means the worldliness of modernity, introduced by Protestantism, but at the same time distancing itself from its own origins in Christianity. Another meaning of actuality in our investigation is the individuals' own world, the explication of inwardness as the "principle of the newer world," which constitutes the immediate basis of modern subjective freedom. Of course, these are not the only Hegelian meanings of actuality even in the framework of spirit. – For the internal relation between actuality and ethical life, see Hegel's remark in the manuscript notes: "Sittlichkeit ist die Idee als *wirkliches Leben*". *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 289 (§ 141). Ethical life as idea is actual life, and *subjectivity is the "actualizing" factor in all modes of actuality* (alle Weise der Wirklichkeit). Ibid., 290.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² "Das Gute erhält seine Bestimmungen durch das Moment der Subjektivität." Manuscript notes to § 141: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 288. – See also here: "Das Gute ist leblos – ohne die Subjektivität." Ibid., 289.

lifeless – as individuals are dependent on ethical life. The significance of ethical life consists in the fact that the lives of individuals are governed by ethical powers (*sittliche Mächte*).²¹³ It is laws and authorities that provide firm, institutionally ensured points of orientation and guarantees for their ends and actions.

The old objection, that Hegel treated individuals as accidental to ethical powers, deserves a closer examination. At first sight, § 145 raises a number of difficulties indeed. Are individuals in such a helpless condition, as this passage suggests? Does it mean that Hegel eliminates individuality, taking back everything he had said on the determinations of subjectivity in the framework of morality? Can ethical life overpower individuals, who have no means of defending themselves? Hegel himself gives the answers in subsequent paragraphs. On the one hand, he emphasizes the firmer authority (*festere Autorität*) of ethical laws compared to natural ones. Laws as ethical powers “*are, in the supreme sense of self-sufficiency.*”²¹⁴ In this sense, their power over the individuals is undeniable. He adds, however, that on the other hand, they are not something *alien* to the subject. On the contrary, the subject bears *spiritual witness* to them as to *its own essence*.²¹⁵

The term ‘spiritual witness’ has cognitive and justificatory connotations. The origins of this formula can be traced back to self-feeling (*Selbstgefühl*) in the subjective spirit, and is also connected to faith and trust as initial forms of reflection, as well as to the higher reflective form of rational insight. Beyond its reference to cognitive, reflective, and justificatory aspects, the metaphor of spiritual witness also extends to the practical, particular elements of activities, such as particular ends, interests, considerations, fears, and hopes.²¹⁶ It shows again how Hegel connects the particularity of the subject, its *subjective fullness* and concrete totality – unfolding in the shapes of the subjective spirit (*in practical emotion*) – and the *particular subjectivity of morality* to the ethical world, without questioning the superiority of the latter. The other side is equally important, though: the integration of subjective freedom as the principle of modern individuality and its actual formations into ethical life, the objective order of institutions and laws does not mean that we should give up individual

²¹³ R, 190 (§ 145).

²¹⁴ R, 190 (§ 146).

²¹⁵ R, 191 (§ 147).

²¹⁶ R, 191 (§ 147).

self-sufficiency or freedom. When speaking of the difference between ancient ethics based on communitarian principles and modern ethical life integrating subjective freedom, it should be made clear that *modern ethical life is a combination of the objective order of institutions and laws on the one hand; and epistemic forms belonging to subjective freedom (rational insight, feeling, faith, conscience, etc.) and formations of the life-world on the other.*

In his manuscript notes to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel refers to the right of the subject as something that the ancient Greeks had no idea of. He also adds, that although the ethical experience of the Greeks is available to us, it is nevertheless another sort of experience. On the one hand, it is true, that ethical powers exist and have a life. Modern ethical powers also have an influence on every individual, and everyone can experience this in the course of one's life. This is where Hegel points out that the action does not have a cause, strictly speaking, but a subjective-inner motivation, which is connected to knowledge, conscience, and conviction.²¹⁷ Ethical powers appear for the individual as something that one can oppose, but cannot avoid – as Hegel says.²¹⁸ The novelty of ethical powers in modernity consists in the fact that *they are no longer immediately present in life: they remain hidden.* Modern human beings meet ethical powers as transformed, or *mediated* by the subject's right to freedom and its differentiated forms. Modern individual separates itself as particularly determined (besonders Bestimmte) from these powers: it is in relation with them and the corresponding objective order, laws, and institutions. Ethical life, which is *given* or *present* in this first shape can only become the actuality of freedom through the mediating acts of the individuals. Through these acts of transformation, individuals can even identify themselves with the substantiality of the objective order, i.e., the *legal* given in the right of objectivity, provided that this objectivity seems rational, and is not contrary to their own freedom of subjective value.

We have seen so far that the *system of the particularity of the good* as a subjective *and* substantial relation develops in the modern shape and framework of ethical life supplemented and modified by the principles of

²¹⁷ In the manuscript notes, he writes on conscience and conviction as subjective forms of knowledge: "ein 'jeder' hat diese Erfahrung, Leben in ihm selbst." *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 296 (§ 147) – Hegel emphasizes that our actions are determined by inner motives, and not by *causes*; insight rather than emotions.

²¹⁸ "Dagegen kann er sich setzen – aber nicht aus sich hinauskommen." Ibid.

*rationality and subjective freedom.*²¹⁹ Marriage and the state are the only great wholes in this system.²²⁰ Hence this differentiation of the ethical powers is interrelated with the differentiation of the elements of subjective freedom, it implies the principle of subjective freedom and integrates its dimensions of actuality. Ethical existence being objective and ethical, at the same time, becomes a new kind of substance, a concrete substance through individual subjectivity and the particularization of lifeworlds. Their relation consists in the fact that the ethical has a firmly established content whose existence is exalted above subjective opinions and preferences.²²¹ This firmly established content can serve as the basis of the subjects' lives, the orientation point of their actions, and thereby as the objective guarantee of their freedom.

Ethical life takes a twofold meaning in this relation: 1. ethics (Sitte) in individual *consciousness*, and 2. *world* as being or existence. Ethical life as world is the ethics (Sitte) of many individuals. This world is articulated and divided in so far as 1. it develops into an intersubjective relation of one subject to another, 2. it becomes an ethical value which is the right of subjective self-consciousness and the inwardness of the action.²²² This *worldliness* of ethical life also means that it is *present*, making the subject as a metaphysical concept transformable to an empirically concrete person: "the subject is essentially *this person* – viewed from this side, an empirical universality."²²³ In this context, the right of the individual is supplemented by two further aspects. The first concerns the internal relation of this right to ethical life: the right of the individuals to their subjective determination to freedom is fulfilled in so far as they belong to ethical actuality as the *certainty* of their freedom has truth in this objectivity, and they *actually* possess their *own* essence, their *internal* universality in ethical life.²²⁴ The second aspect of the individuals' right is the right of individuals to their particularity.²²⁵ The right of individuals to

²¹⁹ "System der Besonderung des Guten," i.e. the system of the particularity of the good is explicated at the points of intersection between ethical life and subjectivity. Manuscript notes, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 292 (§ 142).

²²⁰ "*Ehe, Staat* – sind die einzigen großen sittlichen Ganzen" – says Hegel in his note to § 142. Ibid., 293.

²²¹ R, 189 (§ 144).

²²² See the manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 301 (§ 151).

²²³ "Subjekt ist wesentlich *Dieses*, Person – nach dieser Seite empirische Allgemeinheit." Ibid. – For a systematical treatment of subject as *this* individual, see Michael Quante, "Die Persönlichkeit des Willens" und das "Ich als Dieser."

²²⁴ R, 196 (§ 154).

²²⁵ R, 197 (§ 154).

particularity was introduced by Hegel in morality. The second aspect, the certainty of their freedom in objectivity, which is the fulfillment of their subjective assignment to freedom, is the result of the perspective of ethical life, or actuality. The right to particularity is connected to the *inner world*, the subjective determination to freedom and the certainty thereof in objectivity focuses on the viewpoint of *actuality*. Maintaining the *balance* between these two rights and the two kinds of worlds which serve as their basis – morality and ethical life – is the great challenge for individuals in modernity. Even though it is through detours and mediations, modern individuals do have a chance to conduct their lives *freely and rationally*: they can *actually* possess their own essence and inner world, i.e., the values attained in morality. This, however, has a real possibility not in morality, but in ethical life; this is where they can find the *certainty of their freedom*.

In the next paragraph, Hegel refers to the *right of my knowledge and volition* which he has already discussed in morality.²²⁶ To this he attaches *duty* as a further reflective form and the problem of individual knowledge.²²⁷ Hegel returns here to the basic idea outlined above, saying that ethical life is not solely substantial, but it is my essence (*mein Wesen*), and exists by me. The existence of ethical life, i.e., its right to be respected by me is my duty – but also my right, the existence of my freedom.²²⁸ Hegel now defines subjective freedom at the *intersection of duty, dignity, and law*. He speaks of right and duty as the existence of my freedom: it is my right to make a decision about the duty that links me to ethical life, and to show respect to ethical life. The existence of my freedom is at stake. What is more, *my freedom is also my dignity*. Dignity adds a *further subjective value* to the personal character of my freedom. In the same context he introduces an important aspect of intersubjectivity, which can be understood as a restraint on my dignity (the subjective value just mentioned). As he says: what limits me and my right is the fact, that others

²²⁶ Welfare, introduced in morality by Hegel, has to be linked with duties belonging to ethical life. R, 197 (§ 155).

²²⁷ On the linkage of duties with substantial ethical life, and on understanding ethical life as my own essence, see the manuscript note to § 155: "Pflichten sind bindende Beziehungen, Verhältnisse zur substantiellen Sittlichkeit – aber diese ist *mein Wesen*, hat durch mich selbst Dasein." *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 304.

²²⁸ See the following remark: "Was den Menschen auferlegt wird als Pflicht, soll für etwas geschehen; – nicht nur ihren Vorteil direkt oder indirekt dabei haben – sondern für *Etwas*, worin sie ihre *Würde, Freiheit* haben, dessen Dasein daher *ihr Dasein* – ihr *Recht* ist." Ibid.

have rights, too, as I am equal to them, I am a person as they are. That is why *I must have duties in face of their rights*.²²⁹ Being a person is an obligation to have duties in face of other's rights which are equal to mine. This intersubjectivity proceeds from legal equality. However, I do not as yet talk about actual forms of cooperation, which will have prominence in the family and the civil society, the two great formations of ethical life. I am not concerned here with this point, but with the elements and aspects of the Hegelian conception of modern individuality. I examine the topic of the family from this perspective.

3.2.3. *Collision of the Family and the Individual's Right to Particularity*

Marriage [...] has its objective actuality in the inwardness of subjective disposition and feeling. This accounts for the basic contingency of its existence.²³⁰

It is somewhat surprising that Hegel treats the individual's right to particularity in the first paragraphs of the chapter on family. The essence of the family is the feeling of unity and love, and therefore it is also a substantial unity, in which the individual is not an independent person (*eine Person für sich*), but a member of this unity.²³¹ In contrast to formal Roman law, Hegel emphasizes the *ethical-contentual richness and power*, i.e. the concrete character of marriage: love, the ethical moment in marriage, is – as love – a feeling for actual individuals in the present, not for an abstraction.²³² For Hegel, the right of marriage and the family is undoubtedly higher than the individual's right to particularity. Nevertheless, it does not prevent him from facing the problems arising from the conflict of various rights in modern society in the field of private life. Hegel sees the tension in modern marriage: namely, that the right of marriage as ethical unity and the right of individuals to particularity are not necessarily harmonious and balanced. Above all, his main emphasis is on love as the ethical element of marriage, which is the foundation of this unity and balance. The right of the individual to its own particularity is in contrast with this. If the latter proves to be stronger, we face the crisis of the family and marriage. The individual, by its right to particularity, i.e., *not*

²²⁹ "Was mich, mein Recht nun beschränkt, ist die Tatsache, dass auch Andere [...] Rechte [haben], ich bin ihnen gleich, bin Person wie sie, ich soll Pflichten gegen ihre Rechte haben" Ibid. – Hegel also refers here to the difference between rights and duties proceeding from the relationship to particularity.

²³⁰ R, 213 (§ 176).

²³¹ R, 199 (§ 158).

²³² R, 218 (§ 180).

arbitrarily, initiates a process that can lead to the dissolution of marriage and the family. As Hegel describes this situation, the members of the family become, in their disposition and actuality, like self-sufficient persons again.²³³

The dissolution of the family may have two causes: children becoming independent after they grow up, and divorce. Hegel, however, views the latter as an exception. It is still worth investigating the signs of crisis he detects, and which, in his conception, are closely related to the character and the rights of modern individual existence. He attributes great significance to children's upbringing, after the completion (*Abschluss*) of which, they become self-sufficient and have a right to determine their own lives. If the children's right to be brought up and supported is fulfilled, and the process is completed, they become free in themselves, i.e., grown-up, self-sufficient individuals with the right of self-determination.²³⁴ From this time on, their life is the immediate existence of this freedom. They leave the shape of ethical life characterized by immediate feeling which is still without opposition and enter the sphere of civil society. This step leads to self-sufficiency and freedom of personality. After the separation from the immediate unity of the family, they have the freedom to determine their lives as their own. Children who have become grown-ups thereby acquire the right to particularity and its realization which originates in their own particular lifeworld.

The real threat to marriage and the family is not this natural dissolution, but something, which results from the structural reasons present in private life, rooted in the nature of modernity. Marriage as the institutional framework of private life is an immediate, ethical idea, i.e., love. Ethical marriage means that the arbitrariness of passions is pushed to the background by the spiritual unity present in the consciousness of feeling and ethical love. That is why marriage can be described as monogamy. (Hegel remarks not without irony and resignation that passionate love and marriage are two different things.)²³⁵ The objective actuality of modern marriage consists in ethical love, while its subjective actuality consists in the inwardness of subjective disposition and feeling. The latter, however, can lend relationships an accidental, arbitrary, and somewhat contingent character. This is why Hegel requires a further ethical

²³³ R, 200 (§ 159).

²³⁴ R, 212 (§ 175).

²³⁵ "Leidenschaftliche Liebe und Ehe ist zweierlei." *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 312 (§ 162).

authority which does not intend to sustain marriage at all costs, in case husband and wife are alienated from each other. This permissive attitude which was by no means obvious in the early decades of the nineteenth century, may be explained by the fact that the Hegel we know from his works was a philosopher, and not a husband or philistine. As a philosopher of the modern age, he was consistent in his conviction that subjective freedom and the rights proceeding from it override any compulsion exercised by other members of the family (e.g., parents making decisions about their children's marriage), or by the church using coercion to maintain matrimony. In Hegel's view, this is an abuse of marital right. He repeatedly emphasizes that compulsion has no role in marriage, because compulsion in human relationships threatens freedom itself as a basic principle, the right to self-determination, the right to particularity, and the normative value of them all. This is why he underlines that marriage cannot be decided by parents; its sole foundation is the free consent of the persons who enter this relationship.²³⁶ It also means, on the other hand, that they are solely responsible if estrangement occurs in their marriage.

Hegel also asserts that members of the married couple as modern individuals cannot lose their right to particularity. In the second meaning of particularity, it does not mean arbitrary feelings that could disturb marriage and lead to an intention to divorce. The introduction of the right to particularity into the topic of marriage relies on the fact that this right becomes the part of modern private relations, the structural elements of marriage and the family, as it has its origins in the principle of modern subjective freedom, and belongs to the rights derived from it. Now this principle and the rights derived from it cannot be eliminated from any forms of modern existence, including marriage.

This context helps to clarify Hegel's account of the problematic elements of marriage when he says that love can turn into its opposite, resulting in unpleasant and hostile dispositions and actions. Total estrangement, the emptiness of marriage, is a sign of crisis which Hegel mentions here:

Just as there can be no compulsion to marry, so also can there be no merely legal or positive bond which could keep the partners together once their dispositions and actions have become antagonistic and hostile. A third ethical authority is, however, required in order to uphold the right of marriage – i.e.,

²³⁶ For Hegel, "the subjective origin" of marriage is the "free consent of the persons." "The subjective origin of marriage may lie to a greater extent in the *particular inclination* of the two persons who enter this relationship, or in the foresight and initiative of parents, etc." R, 201 (§ 162).

of ethical substantiality – against the mere opinion that a hostile disposition is present, and against the contingency of merely transient moods, etc., to distinguish these from total estrangement, and to make sure that the partners are totally estranged before *divorce* is granted.²³⁷

In Hegel's view, the essence of marriage and family in modernity is the *tension* between love as the ethical unity of the members, and the right of individuals to particularity. He aims at protecting marriage and family as the institutional shapes of ethical life, therefore he would only allow divorce as an exception. It does not mean, however, that he wants to preserve marriage and family by all costs. He is realistic enough to recognize that modern marriage as a basic form of private relations between human beings is troubled with signs of crisis, and will remain so. The originally different personality (*ursprünglich verschiedene Persönlichkeit*) of the members and their subjective individuality will not disappear in the ethical bond of marriage, and it is not to be expected to. Free devotion that takes place in the objectivity of individuality will not dissolve the subjectivity of individuality.²³⁸ Although Hegel wants to maintain the institutions of marriage and family – which is hardly amazing in the first decades of the nineteenth century – he also brilliantly points out some problems which since then have become the general experience of modern societies, and have their origins in the free individual's right to particularity.

3.2.4. *The Lifeworld of "Concrete Persons" in Civil Society*

Every man has to make his way through life for himself and to gain and maintain an actual position for himself.²³⁹

Individuals [...] are *private persons* who have their own interest as their end [...] they can attain their end only in so far as they themselves determine their knowledge, volition, and action in a universal way and make themselves *links* in the chain of this *continuum*.²⁴⁰

Hegel's conception of civil society has a broad spectrum, from the basic principles of civil society through its institutions and the social layers of modern society to the extreme consequences and phenomena of wealth and poverty in modern economic and social structures. Hegel analyzes his

²³⁷ R, 213 (§ 176).

²³⁸ In the manuscript notes: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 321 (§ 167).

²³⁹ A I, 568.

²⁴⁰ R, 224 (§ 187).

own age, giving a diagnosis of an era that is still relevant today.²⁴¹ Here and now, however, I only concentrate on phenomena and consequences that are relevant for the topic of modern individuality.

Concrete-particular *lifeworld* emerging from particular existence takes shape at the intersection of *morality, family, and civil society*. In *moral-ity*, Hegel has pointed out some general habitual properties of the modern human being as self-reflection and self-determination, but has not focused on such aspects of the former that concern concrete persons and their lifeworlds. The function of morality consists mainly in defining and legitimizing the right of free will as the foundation of the modern existence of individuals. However, the perspective of morality has other elements, such as the personal existence of moral subjectivity, its welfare, and inner world (conscience, feeling). This further facilitates the transformation of the abstract, particular existence of the Self, starting in the subjective spirit, proceeding in morality and ethical life, and leading to the formation of a concrete-particular lifeworld. These elements will be important when discussing the actions of the first subject-shape of civil society (the concrete person), and their effect on the lifeworld. We find further important elements of individual lifeworlds in the *family*, in the fields of private sphere and intimacy (love, sensuality, devotion, own decision, responsibility, solidarity). In the course of its transformation into lifeworld, particular existence takes up further determinations in the institutional framework of private life, like that of the family member (husband, wife, parent, child); the ethical feeling of love; or devotion as the – more or less – life-long gesture of self-sacrifice. Family, however, is primarily one of the centers of the lifeworld (the one in private life), demonstrating embeddedness in ethical life as the foundation and explanation for the firm unity of the lifeworld.

The attachments that modern individuals as private persons have in the lifeworld have a significance and function not only in the family, but also in civil society. The main difference between the family and civil society is that the latter has *particularity as its center*. In civil society, individuals do not sacrifice their particularity to dissolve in a feeling of unity by the attitude of devotion. In marriage, only the first act of deciding to marry is the resolution of two particular persons, and even this is intended to give

²⁴¹ Erzsébet Rózsa, *Hegel gazdaságfilozófiája*; Erzsébet Rózsa, "Das Prinzip der Besonderheit in Hegels Wirtschaftsphilosophie," in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität* (2007).

up their particularity. In contrast, civil society lets individuals to *liberate their particularity*, their right to particularity, and the practical elements belonging to it, like their own needs. Particularity here has the right to develop and express itself in all directions.²⁴² This is the system of ethical life, lost in its extremes. However, in these moments of the civil society, the self-sufficient development of particularity does not lead to corruption and downfall as in ancient states.²⁴³ The modern state can endure the opposition resulting from the liberation of particularity: it allows the opposition to develop, and overcomes it so as to preserve itself within it. Civil society thus has both the *inclination to extremes*, and the *ability to equalize oppositions* as its integral part.

What are the consequences for the life conduct and lifeworld of the individuals of the fact that as subjects of modern civil society, they unfold all sides of their particularity, which in turn leads to oppositions and extremes? Individuals as private persons are only attached to civil society through their own interests and particularity. They know that they can only realize their interests by making their ends and actions, and thereby themselves links in the chain of civil society's *continuum*. In this knowledge and realization, however, they transcend their own particularity, and reach formal universality as a development of freedom. This form of freedom is the result of an insight into necessity: letting the continuum take precedence over their particular interests. This concession is worthwhile, however, as subjectivity can thereby preserve its particularity.²⁴⁴ The shapes of consciousness of particular persons presented here are the forms of rational insight and educated consciousness.²⁴⁵ This acquired knowledge which is connected to their own experience changes the individuals following their own particularity as well. Education is a multiple gain. Education as a form of freedom as liberation leads on to the higher level of subjective substantiality of ethical life as the universalization of the individual – the recognition of its social and economic bonds. Another gain from education is that the subjective will of the particular individual attains objectivity, i.e., a firm foundation and point of orientation. The biggest gain is that through the universalization mediated by reason and education, the particular individual becomes “*the genuine being-for-itself of individuality* giving a *content* to universality, and an *actual determination*

²⁴² R, 221 (§ 184).

²⁴³ R, 222 (§ 185).

²⁴⁴ R, 224 (§ 187).

²⁴⁵ R, 225 (§ 187).

to itself. This process is nothing other than the embeddedness of the particular individual in ethical life, the basic movement of individuals with particular needs in civil society. This movement and structure culminates in the so far unthinkable statement, that the particular individual has become a *free subjectivity which has infinite being-for-itself* in ethical life.²⁴⁶ This full development of the particular individual far exceeds the limits of just satisfying needs: it reaches the highest point of subjectivity in the process of *education/self-interpretation/self-determination*. In the shape of education and through mediation by its various forms (e.g., theoretical and practical education) the personal and inward character of moral subjectivity is supplemented by the normative and, at the same time, actual shape of substantial subjectivity.²⁴⁷

The transformation of the Self's particular existence to the concrete-particular lifeworld of the individual takes place (among other individuals) in these movements of civil society. These movements and their structural elements (oppositions, extremes, and equalization; the particular individual's universalization and integration to ethical life) affect the lifeworld of modern individuals. The sphere of civil society offers a broad space for particular motivations, ends, activities based on the right of particularity, including the inclination to extremes. However, this self-sufficient development of particularity is restrained by the invisible hand of modern society: it lets oppositions develop in order to keep society running, and hold together the lifeworlds of individuals following their own particularity.

Civil society is the territory of the varied social and economic activities of self-sufficient, concrete persons. Its first subject-shape is the *concrete person*, who highlights the *determination of particularity*. The social and economic structures and phenomena of the modern lifeworld relate to the *concrete person* as the subject of civil society. Everything in this world shows itself first as an immediate *world of appearance*, as Hegel says.²⁴⁸ Following the spectacle of particularity, we are at the surface, not in the inner depths of the individuality-shape of morality or the medium of the family based on feeling.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ R, 225–226 (§ 187).

²⁴⁷ Cf. R, 224–226 (§ 187); 232 (§ 197); 234 (§ 201).

²⁴⁸ Hegel describes the transition to civil society as follows: "This relation of reflection accordingly represents in the first instance the loss of ethical life; or, since the latter, as the essence, necessarily *appears*, this relation constitutes the *world of appearance* of the ethical, i.e. *civil society*." R, 219 (§ 181).

²⁴⁹ The metaphor of spectacle describing the operation of civil society is found in § 185 of the *Philosophy of Right*. (R, 222).

Concrete person – the first subject-shape of civil society – is related to universality, but in such a way that the latter is its basis – though still only its *inner* basis; consequently this universality is present only as a formal *appearance* in the particular.²⁵⁰ In other words, in civil society, due to the movements and activities of the concrete person, ethical life or universality is an appearance, which means that it is lost. By the loss of ethical life, universality becomes a formal, apparent mode for particular persons, the protagonists of the spectacle of civil society: they only adapt themselves to it by selfish interests.²⁵¹ In another respect, this ethical loss is also a gain, by the *opportunities expanded and constantly expanding in activities motivated by particularities*. This holds for motivations (needs, and their expansion), practices (specialization, the expansion of production), and forms of cooperation (distribution of labor) as well. This gain is problematic, which is shown by the wrong infinity of needs or the unbounded spread of consumer mentality, but a gain nevertheless. At least according to the logic of civil society, which Hegel tried to understand and reconstruct as accurately as possible.

To understand more precisely the essence and the movements of the concrete person, let us take a look at civil society as the determination of the economic and social sphere of modern society, resting on two principles.

The concrete person who, as a *particular* person, as a totality of needs and a mixture of natural necessity and arbitrariness, is his own end, is *one principle* of civil society. But this particular person stands essentially in *relation* to other similar particulars, and their relation is such that each asserts itself and gains satisfaction through the others, and thus at the same time through the exclusive *mediation* of the form of *universality*, which is *the second principle*.²⁵²

Hegel here points to a number of problems concerning modern existence as lifeworld, enriching the conception of modern individuality that we have already recapitulated according to the first paragraphs of ethical life.

From the perspective of the subject of civil society, the focus is on the concrete person and not on the citizen, as Hegel says in § 190. Citizen as an adequate form of subjectivity is not the starting point but the result of

²⁵⁰ R, 219 (§ 181).

²⁵¹ Selfishness is a basic feature of the motives and ends of the concrete person, which Hegel emphasizes in various contexts. See R, 221 (§ 183), and 224 (§ 187).

²⁵² R, 220 (§ 182).

the movements of civil society. The concrete person is connected to earlier subject-shapes: the abstract Self of the subjective spirit, its immediate natural instincts and arbitrary desires; the legal person of abstract law, who is the first to have a personal character, although only in its relation to the world of things. The concrete person is linked to moral subjectivity, its self-reflective and self-determinant habit, as well as to his or her personal existence as welfare and as inner form of life, i.e., conscience. It is also linked to the form of subjectivity representing the status of the family member; these shapes unite in themselves the personal and substantial character of subjective freedom. Concrete person does not leave behind these subject-shapes and their worlds, but in the course of its development mediated by education and rationality, reflects on them, recalls and integrates them into the fully-developed shape of the (honest) citizen.

The existential forms of particularity have already appeared in these subject-shapes, in the particular existence of the abstract Self, in moral subjectivity's right to particularity, or in renouncing particularity when marrying. However, renouncement seems to have its price: in the first form of subjectivity found in civil society, particularity breaks out with a force never seen before. The liberation of particularity by modern subjective freedom has to be limited, though not by external means. Hegel was a follower of Adam Smith, believing in the working of the invisible hand, and its efficacy. In Hegel, *the limits are set by the cunning of reason*. The basic situation of the person with particular motivations is having to contact other concrete persons who have similar particular motivations, irrespective of one's intentions and ends, in order to fulfill one's needs. It is not what we have seen in the chapter on morality: the satisfaction of subjectivity as such. There, the emphasis was on the universal norm of the right to satisfaction. Here, it is on the concrete-particular practical dimensions of satisfaction. The concrete person is forced to realize the necessity of mutual cooperation – in his or her own interest, to be able to satisfy his or her own needs. In § 182 quoted above, Hegel has summed up two principles of civil society which can also be seen as the basic structures of modern society: they serve to shed light on the character of concrete persons' activities, in which it is also important to highlight the intersubjectivity of practices as a form of cooperation. In the appropriate passages of the *Philosophy of Right*, the elements of intersubjectivity contain both forms of practice and cooperation *and* normativity *ab ovo* and *at the same time*, contrary to Brandom's interpretation. The selfish end and its attainment has both practical and normative connotations, just as securing livelihood, transcending the concrete fulfillment of needs in connection with

the livelihoods of everyone, the securing of the latter, and the right to it, also has this double connotation.²⁵³ It is also obvious from this description that civil society is a very special medium of *actualities*. Here, *teleological rationality* takes over the status and role of traditional substantiality.

The question here is, how the particular expressed in the various motivations and ends can be *realized*. The realization of the right of particularity and the right to satisfaction, which rights are the subjective-internal motivations and norms of morality, *here and now* appears as the realization of concrete-practical incitements of concrete persons (fulfillment of their needs). It follows from the basic structure of civil society, that this realization takes place in intersubjective-cooperational relations, and institutionally regulated forms of cooperation (corporations, administration of justice). In the center of this “system of all-round interdependence” we find particularity and its relation to the particularity of others as a *basic form of cooperation*: it is the basic relation in modern economy and society. It also reveals, that welfare (Wohl) introduced in morality cannot be realized in its “simple totality,” and as a merely personal existence, but in its complexity, its intersubjective and institutional mediation. As Hegel says: “the subsistence and welfare of the individual and his rightful existence are interwoven with, and grounded on the subsistence, welfare and rights of all, and have actuality and security only in this context.”²⁵⁴ The intersubjective character of particularity, which is the second principle of civil society, includes mediation: in fact, both cooperation and institutionalization is a form of mediation. These forms represent the “detours” of fulfilling needs. Generally speaking: in the intersubjective and institutionalized world of the objective spirit, particularity can be transformed into universality only through mediation, which is true of all practical acts. The motivations and activities of *this* concrete person relate to those of others, by ways of mutually mediating, “using” each other. *Mutuality is a latent-normative element in the sphere of practices*, which aims at *protecting use in contrast to abuse*. At the same time, this latent-normative element has a strong practical meaning concerning the fulfillment of particular-concrete needs. Beyond this “usefulness,” mutuality serves to safeguard the symmetry

²⁵³ Cf. R, 220–221 (§§ 182–183). – Brandom “deduces” the normativity of obligation and responsibility from practical cooperation motivated by the desire of erotic consciousness and its satisfaction. Robert Brandom, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution*, 54–74. – In this context, the conceptional differences between the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* are also important.

²⁵⁴ R, 221 (§ 183).

of social relations. Not in the sense of equality, what Hegel rejects in the economic and social spheres, but in the sense of securing everybody's rights as derived from the modern principle of freedom – in the economic field based on the right to fulfill needs and on the principle of own work as well. This Hegelian consideration expresses the basic structural features of the practices of modern society.

Practices are in a multiple connection with *particularity*. First of all, in a *contentual* sense, which arises from the specific needs of concrete persons, the subjects of civil society: these particular needs provide the content of ends and the actions realizing them. Particularity is a basic structural element of civil society not just as a *concrete content* in the above sense. Particularity has the right here to develop and express itself in all directions. The right of particularity in the world of needs implies their infinite differentiation and multiplication. Universality on the other hand attains its function in relation to particularity: it has to serve as the ground and form of particularity. At the same time it has the function of being a power superior to particularity.²⁵⁵ This universal is still formal: a normatively grounded cooperation arising from the (first involuntary) mutual dependence of persons, accepted by them and teleologically rational, but not yet really wanted.

Hegel sums up the *historical* context of the *self-sufficient development of particularity* as follows:

The self-sufficient development of particularity [...] is the moment which appears in the states of the ancient world as an influx of ethical corruption and as the ultimate reason for their downfall. [...] The principle of the *self-sufficient and inherently infinite personality* of the individual, the principle of subjective freedom, which arose in an inward form in the *Christian* religion and in an external form (which was therefore linked with abstract universality) in the *Roman* world, is denied its right in that merely substantial form of the actual spirit. This principle is historically later than the Greek world, and the philosophical reflection which can fathom these depths is likewise later than the substantial Idea of Greek philosophy.²⁵⁶

The time has come for this principle to claim its right only after the reformation and the formation of civil society, which Hegel investigated on the example of England.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ R, 221 (§ 184).

²⁵⁶ R, 222–223 (§ 185).

²⁵⁷ "The example of England permits us to study these phenomena on a large scale," which demonstrates that the excess of wealth threatens the normal standard of living (ordentliche Lebensweise) and the honour of the citizens. R, 267 (§ 245).

A further, fourth meaning of particularity is that civil society is the appropriate place for the *all-round development of the particularity of individuals*. Civil society offers a broad space for concrete persons to *satisfy their needs and fully develop their welfare*. This way we return to the original motivation: the immediately given multiplicity of needs in the *inwardness* of single, concrete individuals. At the same time, we acquire an extra meaning: in this context, Hegel points out the controversial nature of consumer mentality in modernity. This mentality as the cultivation of needs and their satisfaction contains positive civilizing elements, as well as destructive moments threatening particularity itself, as a right derived from the principle of modern individuality. Particularity unfolding in its pleasures has a destructive effect not just on substantiality, but on particularity itself.²⁵⁸ The satisfaction of needs, which is a right, proves to be in actuality a process filled and burdened with oppositions, governed by both chance and necessity. Thus, civil society is not just the ground (Boden) of the development of the individual's particularity and subjective freedom, but also undermines this ground, as it gives space to everything that can wreck subjective freedom as the achievement of modernity. The freedom of subjects can disappear from a world ruled by mere chance or pure necessity. Civil society as a spectacle of extremes risks subjective freedom, the great achievement of history.

In these opposites and their complexity, civil society affords a spectacle of extravagance and misery as well as of the physical and ethical corruption common to both.²⁵⁹

To avoid social and economic extremes, and the threats they pose to subjective freedom as the basis of every individual's lifeworld, individuals have to make themselves links in a continuum. This is how they can find firm foundation in life. This challenge can only be met if individuals do not see and determine themselves as merely particular persons. Beyond the basic stance of being private persons, they have not just to consider, but also to inwardly be initiated to *interconnection with others*. Inward initiation differs from using others to fulfill one's needs in mutual dependence. The latter arises from a primarily pragmatic motive. By contrast, interiorized interconnection with others has a normative character, and thereby a stabilizing effect as well. The advantage of this *subjective normativity* is evident: particular persons can only have their own interest as their *durable*

²⁵⁸ R, 222 (§ 185).

²⁵⁹ R, 222 (§ 185).

end, if they determine their knowledge, volition, and action in a universal way, thus making themselves links in the chain of this continuum.²⁶⁰ Thus, *durable stabilization* of the lifeworlds of modern individuals depends primarily on themselves, the *rational* insight and rational practical attitude they can realize in their practices. This way individuals can avoid the traps hidden in the way of satisfying their needs, which arise from the opposition between mere chance and necessity, and they can integrate into their actions the subjective-normative elements of a still formal freedom, thus maintaining the possibility of moving further towards an actual-normative freedom. This, however, points beyond the framework of civil society and the world of needs. At the same time, we can identify and manage the collisions of civil society exactly from this perspective. The *basic stance of rationality* is not the property of civil society, but of *morality as such*. It is from this stance, and not from mere practical-pragmatic considerations that we can acquire reliable knowledge about the working and the appropriate operation of this world, the adequate form of knowledge of which is understanding, and not reason.²⁶¹ Without an insight into these structures of modern society, and without the practical implementation of this insight and knowledge, individuals as concrete persons do not have the opportunity to ground their lifeworlds and the satisfaction of their needs, giving them a firm and durable foundation.

(*Rational*) *insight is an individual-epistemic form*, although rationality stands behind it as an anthropological constant. Education as *educated consciousness* is the universal, socio-culturally contextualized form of knowledge, which has an outstanding role in Hegel's conception on the development of individuals.²⁶² Hegel assigns an eminent status to education in civil society.²⁶³ The mediating role of education as training for

²⁶⁰ R, 224 (§ 187).

²⁶¹ Understanding is an epistemic form, but also a shape of reality: the structure and operation of civil society can be understood through the principles and mechanisms of understanding. In civil society, selfish and cooperative elements, practical and normative attitudes are organized into a "system of all-round interdependence," which is a "state of necessity," a state "of the understanding," therefore oppositions are not alien to it. See R, 221 (§ 183).

²⁶² R, 224–226 (§ 187).

²⁶³ Hegel treats education not only as a structural element of civil society, where theoretical and practical education are connected to social status and profession. In abstract law, education is linked to the general and comprehensive determination of human existence, i.e. freedom. He highlights here the gain of the epistemic act of education, with reference to the reflectivity of thought as an element of education: "This cultivation of the universality of thought is the absolute value of *education* (cf. § 187)." R, 52 (§ 20) – Practical gain consists in the fact that the people can make themselves free through education.

freedom establishes the appropriate connection between particularity and universality in the practical relation of the individual, to oneself and one's motivations, needs and ends as well as to the spheres of actuality. Education has a deep and comprehensive, culturally civilizing function: education is work towards a higher liberation through which individuals make themselves substantially subjective. Education is also the hard work of opposing mere subjectivity of conduct, of opposing the immediacy of desire, as well as the subjective vanity of feeling and the arbitrariness of caprice.²⁶⁴ Through the mediation of this educated stance and habitual disposition, the subjective will of the individuals, all of their practical motivations and activities get a chance to be appropriately realized. In this realization, *particularity becomes the actual being-for-itself of single individuals: their own concrete-particular lifeworld*. The individual finds stable and at the same time cultivated points of orientation in ethical universality interiorized this way as a substantial norm. Thus, ethical life does not only offer the contents of activities to transcend the limited world of civil society, but a firm foundation for the self-determination of individuals.²⁶⁵ Understanding all this affects the practical sphere of needs and their satisfaction (the key moment of civil society): it is exactly through the rational and educated forms of mediation that needs and their satisfaction can be cultivated, which again lends durability and stability to the lifeworld.²⁶⁶

Hegel describes the first element of civil society, *the system of needs* as the "*sphere of particularity*." Particularity here is not to be taken as the internal world of private persons, but as an economic and social structural layer of modern world. Nevertheless, these objective structural elements are kept alive and in motion by concrete persons: as first element, particularity as subjective need which attains its objectivity through satisfactions, mediated by activities. This sphere of particularity however, offers not only the satisfaction of current needs, but the fulfillment of subjective particularity as well, which is moral subjectivity's right and form of life. The introduction of this element into the system of needs strengthens the individuals right to particularity as a norm derived from the principle of subjective freedom and the right to self-determination in modernity.

Education is its own transformation into freedom (Formierung zur Freiheit selbst) – says the manuscript note to § 57. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 125.

²⁶⁴ R, 225 (§ 187).

²⁶⁵ R, 225 (§ 187).

²⁶⁶ Durability as security in the future is a sensitive spot of modern individuals' lifeworld. It is no accident that Hegel returns to this question in various contexts, e.g. in § 183 of the *Philosophy of Right*.

However, in civil society, the satisfaction of subjective particularity in general means something else than it does in morality: its primary meaning is not normative but *practical*. Here, the satisfaction of subjective particularity is an *intersubjective* act: it can be realized through relating to others' needs. At the same time, it brings about the universalization of capricious-subjective needs, which can be conceived as the reinforcement of the satisfaction of subjective needs.²⁶⁷ Yet the main point is, that in the system of needs, Hegel presents the system as a multilayered and structured fabric of concrete-practical motivations, activities, and spheres of actuality. The intersubjective dimension as determination of the mutual relations between individuals is the second structural layer of the system of needs, whereby their satisfaction can become socialized and cultivated. Universality as recognition is a further moment that has a normative connotation and offers an opportunity to overcome the abstractness of individual needs, making them concrete, i.e., social needs.²⁶⁸

This cultivation and socialization of needs takes place in the sphere of the practical. From this viewpoint we can interpret further elements of the system, the multiplication of needs and means, the dividing and differentiating of the concrete need into individual parts and aspects.²⁶⁹ Hegel sees this as particularization, even to an extreme degree. Particularity has its roots in modern subjective freedom, therefore it tends not to reduce but to increase natural inequality. The right to particularity does not stop the spread of inequality, on the contrary, it rather supports it.²⁷⁰ The inequalities in resources and skills have a socially and economically differentiating effect in themselves. Beyond this, the cultivation of needs is a sort of liberation: the social type of consumption. Consumption is at the same time the form of the particular individual's freedom, which is one of the grounds for the perpetual expansion of consumer mentality.²⁷¹ This insight is an important element in legitimizing consumer society. Hegel, however, does not lay the emphasis here.

He focuses on the fact that needs and the socialized forms of their satisfaction have ambiguous consequences. Modern consumption knows no limits. Hegel speaks here of the bad infinity of the structure of needs in the modern world, and its movements towards extremes. Luxury and misery,

²⁶⁷ R, 227 (§ 189).

²⁶⁸ R, 229 (§ 192).

²⁶⁹ R, 228 (§ 190).

²⁷⁰ R, 233 (§ 200).

²⁷¹ R, 230 (§ 194).

wealth and poverty are extremes threatening the normal functioning of civil society. That is why Hegel looks for a solution that can guarantee the equalization of social and economic tensions, thereby having an enduring stabilizing effect on the lifeworlds of individuals. He examines how the objective order of civil society, its social structures (the estates and institutions – administration of justice, corporations) can moderate modern society's inclination towards the extremes and the instability of the lifeworld. He stresses once more the significance of the principle of subjective particularity which represents the basic difference between the ancient and the modern world.²⁷² It is neither subjective particularity in itself that is problematic, nor the individualization of modern society. Hegel comes to the insight that the principle of subjective particularity cannot be realized in itself immediately, for this is exactly what carries risks for the functioning of modern society. His suggestion is that concrete persons integrate their particularity, their living space ranging from needs to lifeworld into social and economic structures in a *conscious and cultivated* manner. As he says:

But if it is supported by the objective order, conforming to the latter and at the same time retaining its rights, subjective particularity becomes the sole animating principle of civil society and of the development of intellectual activity, merit, and honor.²⁷³

In his view, animating modern society, or securing its dynamics is not primarily the task of an objective order of institutions and laws, but rather a question of the *attitude of the individual*. The attitude of the individual concerns the two relations of particularity treated here. It gives itself actuality, i.e., enters existence as a determined particularity. The moral, internal, personal existence of the individual has attained an actual reality: it has become a *determined particular*, as one part of actuality. However, in the framework of the objective order, the individual has a right to the form of *universality* as well, which has now both a *personal and a substantial* character, connected to both morality and ethical life. Ethical feeling is the form joined with this particularity of the individual. This is a form that can be reflected and lived: knowledge and existence at the same time, with subjective-internal and substantial contents in the particular world of the individual. Ethical feeling goes beyond education in so far as it takes into itself not only formal determinations, but contentual ones

²⁷² R, 237–238 (§ 206).

²⁷³ R, 238 (§ 206).

as well. Ethical feeling permeates the particularity of the individual not only in knowledge, but also in volition and action, in its practices and lifeworld. Universality attained this way is normative: it manifests itself as recognition, rectitude and the honor of one's estate. These socio-cultural features can be obtained and enjoyed by individuals through *conscious and cultivated* affiliation with social groups (estates) and organizations.²⁷⁴

As we can see, Hegel pointed out through the embeddedness of individuals' particular existence in the structures of objective order, that civil society, the center of the modern world, can only become actual i.e. effective and successful by recognizing the individual's right to particularity; that is how it attains actuality and ethical objectivity.²⁷⁵

The *administration of justice* is an element in the objective order of civil society, its function being the *protection of property and personality*. Hegel thereby highlights another dimension of the lifeworld. Both property and personality possess legal recognition and validity in civil society. The special task of the administration of justice depends on two factors. First, it is crucial that the individual reaches the level of knowledge where s/he conceives of himself or herself as a universal person. The consciousness that I am apprehended as a universal person is of infinite importance.²⁷⁶ In other words, the *right of self-consciousness* as the human being's comprehensive right in modernity contains the *consciousness of right* as well: what exists and is valid as right must be known and universally valid. Rights must be known, which is possible through customary rights containing the moment of being thought and of being known.²⁷⁷ It is a requirement that laws should be made universally known.²⁷⁸ Legal consciousness as the right of subjective consciousness is a sort of common treasure, according to Hegel. It is in this sense that he requires simple and universal determinations and simple and universal principles in a public legal code which is capable of comprehension, without casteism and specialization.²⁷⁹ *Law becomes the material of education*: knowledge available for every single individual. This Hegelian conception of legal culture is not only an important component of his theory of education, but also an inte-

²⁷⁴ R, 238–239 (§ 207).

²⁷⁵ R, 239 (§ 207).

²⁷⁶ R, 240 (§ 209).

²⁷⁷ R, 241 (§ 211).

²⁷⁸ R, 246 (§ 215).

²⁷⁹ R, 247 (§ 216).

gral part of the self-interpretation and self-determination of the modern individual, and its explanation of the world and its relation to actuality. *Thus, legal culture is one of the basic elements of the Hegelian conception of the culture of freedom based on the basic idea of education for freedom.*

The law, according to its content is applied to the material of civil society – to its relationships and varieties of property and contracts in its endlessly expanding diversity and complexity – and to ethical relationships based on emotion, love, and trust.²⁸⁰ Hegel introduces here the importance of application to particular cases.²⁸¹ These two elements – the empirical universality of legal consciousness and the law's application to particular cases – is united as follows:

The rights of the subjective consciousness include not only that of making the laws publicly known (see § 215), but also the possibility of knowing how the law is *actualized* in particular cases.²⁸²

It is not the particular case, but the universal content in it that is of public importance. That is why Hegel emphasizes the publicity of the administration of justice. It is a knowledge that is available for every educated and intelligent human being. This Hegelian requirement is in accordance with his conception of subjective freedom and his notion of modern individuality. He assigns a specific status and task to the administration of justice, in so far as the administration of justice has to actualize the unity of universality in itself and subjective particularity as the complementary basic structure of modern society.

The actualization of this unity in its extension to the entire range of particularity, first as a relative union, constitutes the determination of the *police*; and secondly, as a limited but concrete totality, it constitutes the *corporation*.²⁸³

It is from the viewpoint of this structure of the administration of justice, that securing the livelihood and welfare of individuals comes to the fore. Hegel highlights this by stating that the individual is now capable of actualizing particular welfare, not just thinking and planning it inwardly. The time has now come to actualize particular welfare. The road from law to welfare, which is open for every individual's lifeworld, leads through

²⁸⁰ R, 244 (§ 213).

²⁸¹ R, 245 (§ 214).

²⁸² R, 254 (§ 224).

²⁸³ R, 259 (§ 229).

the insight to the objective order to civil society, to the actualization of particular welfare possessing the whole range of particularity guaranteed by epistemic forms (insight, education, feeling), appropriate practices (mutual recognition), and institutions (administration of justice, corporations). Thereby the system of needs has transformed into a multiply differentiated and secured system. Through legal-institutional forms and cultivated-socialized, intersubjective forms of conduct, formations of consciousness and practices, it can attain a stability pointing beyond securing livelihood and welfare: it offers a firm ground and enduring firmness for the individuals' lifeworlds.²⁸⁴ This stable system which is comprehensible and conceivable for everyone is the foundation where individuals can build and maintain their well-arranged, manageable lifeworlds in the medium of their activities, formations of consciousness, intersubjective connections, and institutions.

We should remind ourselves in this context, that the right relation in the whole is that broadened horizon of modern human being's culture of thinking and conduct, that Hegel considered to be the preliminary condition of the efficacy of modern society and at the same time the condition of the full development of every particular existence. Various collisions, which are inevitable elements in modern society can be limited only if we possess rational insight, appropriate education, training, ethical feeling, and appropriate forms of conduct and practices. To put it differently, Hegel does not rely solely on institutional guarantees, but lays stress on the *way of thinking and the attitude* of the individuals. This conception, however cannot be understood and explained without the embeddedness of these spheres into substantial forms and institutions. In § 238 of the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel repeats how civil society tears the individual out of the ethical bond of the family, making his livelihood subject to chance, and himself a son of civil society.²⁸⁵ The vanished security of livelihood, which is not simply a contingent phenomenon, but a socially typical experience, can be regained by the individual, but only by ways of detours. That is to say, one has to educate and train one's conduct and attitude, preparing for the appropriate practices by forming a rational habitual disposition towards actuality. The individual trains and learns. By doing this, one also shapes the objective order of modern society, which

²⁸⁴ R, 259–260 (§ 230).

²⁸⁵ R, 263 (§ 238).

offers possibilities to secure the desired welfare and the enduring stability of particular lifeworld.²⁸⁶

Corporation as second family is the institution that brings back ethical life to civil society, but not by sacrificing particular livelihood: on the contrary, by securing it. Thus, corporation becomes one of those institutions of civil society which contribute to the stabilization of the individuals lifeworld through mediating the particular. The essence of the corporation is as follows:

The work performed by civil society is divided into different branches according to its particular nature. Since the inherent likeness of such particulars, as the quality *common* to them all, comes into existence in the *association*, the selfish end which pursues its own particular interest comprehends and expresses itself at the same time as a universal end; and the member of civil society, in accordance with his *particular skill*, is a member of a corporation whose universal end is therefore wholly *concrete*, and no wider in scope than the end inherent in the trade which is the corporation's proper business and interest.²⁸⁷

The ethical elements of the corporation (e.g., the honor of the estate) serve as a basis for individuals and families through integration into this community. As Hegel says here, in the corporation, the family not only has its firm basis in that its livelihood is guaranteed – i.e., it has secure resources (see § 170) – on condition of its possessing a certain capability, but the two [i.e., livelihood and capability] are also *recognized*. Because of this recognition, the individual has his honor in his estate.²⁸⁸ Hegel calls attention to the danger of not connecting to a corporation:

If the individual is not a member of a legally recognized corporation (and it is only through legal recognition that a community becomes a corporation), he is without the *honour of belonging to an estate*, [...], his livelihood and satisfaction lack *stability*.²⁸⁹

If the individual tries to gain recognition through the external manifestations of success in his trade it means that he does not live in a way

²⁸⁶ The “normal standard of living” is dependent on education, but also on welfare, its stability, and future security. These are in turn threatened by the phenomena investigated on the example of England, the extremes of civil society and colonization. Cf. R, 267–269 (§§ 245–248). – The example of England leads on to the considerations on the welfare functions of the modern state. Cf. chapter B.III.2.4.

²⁸⁷ R, 270 (§ 251).

²⁸⁸ R, 271 (§ 253).

²⁸⁹ R, 271 (§ 253).

appropriate to his estate and no way of life appropriate to such an estate can be devised.²⁹⁰ In differentiated civil society, appropriate behavior is a precondition of securing life and property and of appropriate way of life in general. Therefore appropriate way of conduct and habitual disposition cannot be arbitrary or contingent, but a rational way of securing the stability of particular life conduct, which can be shaped and maintained in the complementary structures of individual lifeworlds and social-institutional forms (law, marriage, corporations, institutions of the state).

3.2.5. *The Lifeworld of Particular Individuals in the Context of the State*

The principle of modern states has enormous strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to attain fulfilment in the *self-sufficient extreme* of personal particularity, while at the same time *bringing it back to substantial unity* and so preserving this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.²⁹¹

...in the process of fulfilling his duty, the individual must somehow attain his own interest and satisfaction or settle his own account, and from his situation within the state, a right must accrue to him whereby the universal cause becomes *his own particular cause*.²⁹²

It is the destiny of individuals to lead a universal life, not just a particular one.²⁹³ This originates in the fact that in modernity, the individual is divided into private person and substantial person, and has to balance between these two personal beings. Lifeworld takes shape primarily around the first personal being, in which the individual conceives of himself or herself as a private person and behaves accordingly. Being a person becomes conscious in the sphere of law, while personal existence comes into being in the perspective of the inner world of morality. These become elements of the existence of the private person, the first explicit shape of which is in the family, in the intimate, felt world of individuals. Through their roles in the family, however, individuals gain experience and knowledge which makes it clear for them that they are substantial persons as well. The world of feeling is not purely private, either, no matter how intimate it is, for it demonstrates belonging, solidarity, and responsibility.

²⁹⁰ R, 271 (§ 253).

²⁹¹ R, 282 (§ 260).

²⁹² R, 284–285 (§ 261).

²⁹³ R, 276 (§ 258).

Family thus carries in itself an internal opposition: its members are private persons, but at the same time, substantial persons as well. Sacrificing particularity in marriage and family expresses in itself this controversial nature: particular personalities give up their particularity which constitutes the core of their existence as private persons, in order to strengthen and assert their ethical life, and existence as substantial persons as a spouse or family member. This form of the paradox is expressed most sharply in the structure of modern marriage and family, and does not hold for modern ethical life in general. Nevertheless, in the introductory paragraphs on ethical life, Hegel says, that the right of individuals to their particularity is likewise contained in ethical substantiality, for particularity is the mode of outward appearance in which the ethical exists.²⁹⁴ What Hegel expresses here is the fact that mediation between being a private person and being a substantial person is somehow given as a task for individuals in all ethical formations. The requirement that individuals should lead a universal life, is based on these experiences and insights, and not on authorities: individuals have to rely on these experiences and knowledge when trying to understand themselves as both private persons and substantial persons, and shaping and practicing the corresponding forms of conduct.²⁹⁵

In the way of conduct based on the double structures of modernity, first, immediate motivations originating in welfare and happiness, and realized in the satisfaction of needs, lead on to the higher motivation of freedom in the state. Hegel sees the state as the framework of the actuality of the concrete freedom of life; this life is shaped at the intersection of the ways of conduct of the private person and the substantial person.

The state is the actuality of concrete freedom. But *concrete freedom* requires that personal individuality and its particular interests should reach their full *development* and gain *recognition of their right* for itself (within the system of the family and of civil society), and also that they should, on the one hand, *pass over* of their own accord into the interest of the universal, and on the other, knowingly and willingly acknowledge this universal interest even as their own *substantial spirit*, and *actively pursue it* as their *ultimate end*. The effect of this is that the universal does not attain validity or fulfilment without the interest, knowledge, and volition of the particular, and that individuals do not live as private persons merely for these particular interests without at the same time directing their will to a universal end and acting in conscious awareness of this end. The principle of modern states has enormous strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to

²⁹⁴ R, 197 (§ 154).

²⁹⁵ For Hegel's critique of authority, see chapter B.III.2.3.

attain fulfilment in the *self-sufficient extreme* of personal particularity, while at the same time *bringing it back to substantial unity* and so preserving this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.²⁹⁶

Modern state can become the actuality of concrete freedom if it is built upon individuals possessing personal individuality and personal particularity. The state recognizes the right to particularity, even allows it to develop into the self-sufficient extreme of personal particularity. This freedom of particularity takes shape in the movements of the private person following his or her own ends and interests. In this relation, the private person seems to be the selfish side of the individual's particularity.²⁹⁷ This selfishness becomes apparent and gets realized in the movements of civil society. The recognition and integration of the principle of particularity into the mechanisms of the modern state shows its enormous strength and depth. Personal particularity gets elevated into ethical life, into the modern state, whereby private persons become substantial persons through the knowledge and volition of the ethical.

The above passage clearly shows that the state has no excessive power: the model is one of equilibrium, for which the individual's right to particularity and the particularity of their personal existence are of crucial importance. This model does not support the alleged overpower of the state, one of the widespread commonplaces of Hegel literature. It rather exemplifies the requirement that (among others) the state should serve the balanced working of the complex structures of the modern world, in order to maintain modern society and stabilize the lifeworld of the individuals. On the one hand, the linkage of the lifeworld to the institutions of the state as a stabilizing factor is manifested by the recognition of the right of particularity (the center of the lifeworld) and its forms of reality. As Hegel puts it, personal individuality and its particular interests reach their full development and gain recognition of their right for itself (in the system of the family and civil society). On the other hand, particular individuals recognize the universal as their own substantial spirit in their knowledge and will. The acts of mutual recognition between particular individuals and the principles and institutions of the modern state establish the strength of civil society in both directions. The principles of the state, in opposition at first, are mediated by the compensatory model of mutual recognition,

²⁹⁶ R, 282 (§ 260). After the discussion of government authority, Hegel repeats his considerations on the interdependence of the "particular spheres" of civil society and the state. Cf. R, 329 (§ 288).

²⁹⁷ R, 224 (§ 187).

in order to reduce the negative effects of their opposition, and to utilize the potential hidden in the consciousness and activities of particular individuals, as well as in the institutional order and mechanisms of the modern state to consolidate modern society and individuals. In this sense can particularity with its inclination to extremes become a structural element of the modern state. The cunning of reason (*List der Vernunft*) governs not just history, but the highly complex world of modern society as well. We can now understand how the unprecedented broadening of the lifeworld can enrich the new world of modernity, in spite of all structural contradictions and collisions inherent to it.

The individual, who becomes the self-sufficient extreme of personal particularity represents a *specific cultural-historical type of personality*. Its socio-culturally contextualized shape is the honest citizen, the protagonist of modern society.²⁹⁸ Hegel describes modern personality in an ambiguous, sometimes resigned manner. His aversion is due to the modern personality's inability to become a great character.²⁹⁹ If every individual has the right and the opportunity to become a particular personality, which in fact follows from the principle of subjective freedom and the right to self-determination, then mediocrity will prevail.³⁰⁰ This is true even though the individual's right to their own particularity and its consequences in the lifeworld makes modern society richer and more varied. The other big loss is the vanished security of the old world. To regain this security, it is not enough to establish institutional mechanisms of mediation: we also need appropriate intellectual and habitual dispositions, which can be attained by learning/education. In this complex basic situation, state has the task of contributing to the stability and security of the particular lifeworld of the individuals, which *can be no longer stable*, due to the

²⁹⁸ On the Hegelian conception of the honest citizen, see chapters A.I.3. and C.III.4.

²⁹⁹ The question of great character is treated in detail in different versions of the philosophy of art, in the framework of lifeworld and Greek tragedy. Epic is the territory of heroic self-consciousness, Greek tragedy is that of great personalities. The former is the world of Achilles, the latter is the world of Antigone and Creon. Hegel also refers to heroic self-consciousness in the *Philosophy of Right*: R, 146 (§ 118). He mentions Oedipus here; later, Antigone appears as well. R, 206 (§ 166). However, both of them are examples of a subjectivity that has not reached its appropriate shape. Oedipus is deficient in virtue of the right of knowledge, Antigone in virtue of inwardness.

³⁰⁰ Mediocrity as the problem of modern lifeworld and modern art is mentioned in the manuscript notes to the *Philosophy of Right*. See *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 235 (§ 124). The note to § 118 also states that "dramatic" in modern times can be unfortunate, but never tragic or heroic. *Ibid.* 220.

principle of the modern world (the principle of subjective freedom), the right of self-determination and the right to particularity.

Although individuals are subjects in their relation to the state, the state has the task of guaranteeing the security of the life and property of the individuals. The individual, however, is also to take part in this: individuals thinking and acting according to the extremes of their particularity can only preserve themselves if they understand and accept that there exists something above them, and has the power and means to prevent modern society from falling apart. Individuals themselves have to act in order to fulfill this end; their effort is a fundamental condition of the security of their life. Mutual recognition is a crucial moment: individuals have to recognize the ethical power and authority of the modern state, while the modern state recognizes and guarantees the individuals' right to particularity. This mutual recognition is supplemented by the active behavior of the individuals. This point makes it clear, that the subjection of the individuals to the state is not some sort of an arch-conservative claim by Hegel. It is rather the rational insight of individuals to the structures and the operation of the modern state. It is indispensable for appropriate life conduct, and for developing an appropriate practical attitude towards the spheres of actuality, and one's own particular motivations. Developing this attitude is not as arduous a work as the study of philosophy. With the help of healthy human understanding and some education, we can develop rational insight and a rational practical attitude towards actuality, and its corresponding mechanisms.³⁰¹

The modern human being's forms of consciousness include a wide variety of socio-cultural forms, such as education and ethical feeling. A further modern form of consciousness, which is important in regard of the relation to the modern state is *public opinion* (öffentliche Meinung). In Hegel's view, it expresses the *particularity of the opinions of many*. Here, Hegel outlines a development of modernity that will gain importance later: the specific phenomena of the consciousness of mass society, and the specific late modern phenomena of producing information and shaping opinion. Public opinion, the collective appearance of which contains the substantial and the true, is linked with its opposite, with what is distinct in itself as the particular opinions of the many.³⁰² The particularity

³⁰¹ R, 11–12 (Preface).

³⁰² R, 353 (§ 316).

of the individuals is not expressed here in its individuality, but in its linkage with the many as the element of the formation of masses.³⁰³ The particular consciousness of individuals takes the shape of the opinions of the many. Truth and endless error unite immediately within this form of consciousness.³⁰⁴ The individual, linking the particularity of his or her knowledge about public affairs to the opinions of the many, finds that particularity and the right to express an opinion legitimize public opinion, which will be of outstanding importance in a much later phase of modernity.³⁰⁵ Hegel, of course, thinks that the contents of public opinion is controversial; it deserves to be respected as well as despised.³⁰⁶ Its merit for public affairs is that it provides the opportunity of acquiring knowledge about public affairs and the state, and contributes to the development of such capacities that enable individuals to form more rational judgments on public affairs. They get insight into official procedures, and thus get along better with them. Familiarity with official procedures is another element *improving the legal culture* of modern individuals. Public opinion is thus a *means of education* in a multiple sense. It is also expressed by the fact that it is a remedy for the self-conceit of individuals and of the mass.³⁰⁷ Its main deficiency is that it *does not have the measure of distinction*, therefore it does not have the ability to make the knowledge of public affairs *as substantial* a determinate knowledge. At the same time it is remarkable how Hegel considers public opinion and publicity to be the structural elements of the modern state. Not simply with regard to liberties, freedom of speech, or freedom of the press, but as a self-sufficient entity with a great future ahead, in spite of all its contradictions.

³⁰³ Hegel examines masses as a phenomenon of modern society in several contexts. In the system of civil society, individuals are incorporated into the mass. R, 285 (§ 262). Individuals in the mass do not constitute a rabble: they are private persons and substantial persons. R, 287 (§ 264). The basis of the formation of rabble is the loss of equilibrium between subsistence and own work, which leads to extremism in basic social structure: "When a large mass of people sinks below the level of a certain standard of living [...] that feeling of right, integrity [Rechtlichkeit], and honour which comes from supporting oneself by one's own activity and work, is lost. This leads to the creation of a rabble, which in turn makes it much easier for disproportionate wealth to be concentrated in a few hands." R, 266 (§ 244). The rabble – R, 307 (§ 272) – takes on a form of *disposition* that manifests itself as a behavior both in individual life conduct, as well as belonging to a mass.

³⁰⁴ R, 354, (§ 317).

³⁰⁵ Cf. chapter B.III.2.3.

³⁰⁶ R, 355 (§ 318).

³⁰⁷ R, 352 (§ 315).

A further moment important for the Hegelian conception of the modern individual in the context of the state is the significance of the Hegelian notion of the *welfare state* (Wohlfahrt). The welfare state is one of the functions of the modern state, which can be traced back to the Hegelian diagnosis of the economic and social collisions of modern civil society. Individual, as the concrete person of civil society is *ab ovo* dependent on others: s/he cannot sustain his or her life alone. This holds for the totality of needs. Individuals seek not just the satisfaction of their needs, but want to make it durable and foreseeable. They deem to find it in securing welfare. Welfare is the totality of the needs of particular individuals.³⁰⁸ *Particular welfare* is both a *right and an actuality*, legitimized by adherence to a corporation.³⁰⁹ Nevertheless, if the unions of civil society are incapable of securing individuals' existence, the state has to exercise influence on it. This always-timely problem of modern society gives Hegel an occasion to investigate the relations between civil society, the corporations, and the state, and discuss the welfare function of the modern state. These relations are filled with tensions, which can nevertheless be an advantage for individuals:

Just as civil society is the field of conflict in which the private interest of each individual comes up against that of everyone else/ so do we here encounter the conflict between private interests and particular concerns of the community, and between both of these together and the higher viewpoints and ordinances of the state. The spirit of the corporation, which arises when the particular spheres gain legal recognition, is now at the same time inwardly transformed into the spirit of the state, because it finds in the state the means of sustaining its particular ends. This is the secret of the patriotism of the citizens in the sense that they know the state as their substance, for it is the state which supports their particular spheres and the legal recognition, authority, and welfare of these.³¹⁰

The rational insight of the citizen consists in the fact that s/he accepts the ethical present in the state, and knows it as his or her own essence. The reason for doing this is that *the state recognizes his or her particularity, and*

³⁰⁸ Hegel, like Hobbes, thinks that the world of civil society is a state of everyone's war against everyone else. R, 329 (§ 289). Belonging to a corporation, however, as a social bond of the individuals' particular welfare as a central element of their lifeworld, possessing normativity (honour, honesty, rectitude) which can provide them with a sort of stability (ibid.). Hegel emphasizes that the "security of life and property" is based on the fact that the particular has its roots in the universal, which lends "depth and strength" to it. In other words, the corporation, too, gains strength and depth from individuals.

³⁰⁹ R, 273 (§ 255).

³¹⁰ R, 329–330 (§ 289).

is ready to contribute to its stabilization. The corporation sees the state as the means to maintain particular ends.³¹¹ Hegel, however, remarks not without irony that the secret of patriotism is exactly that the state maintains the citizens' particular spheres of interest, and the legal recognition, authority, and welfare of these. The acceptance of the state relies on *particular* interests. He also remarks here that the system of formal freedom dominating the state opens an arena for petty passions and imaginings.³¹²

For Hegel, modern state is a constitutional state, founded on the *rule of law*, with objective guarantees and the division of power; it takes on welfare functions as well, although only to a certain extent. He also points out that the system of formal freedom, and the mechanisms of the rule of law also open the way to smaller or bigger abuses. The complacency and self-conceit of official work belong here. The pillars of the rule of law are the central status of the constitution as an objective guarantee and ethical feeling as a subjective guarantee.³¹³ However, the modern state has to face problems which originate in the social and economic structures and influence or even burden the lifeworlds of the individuals, and have an effect on the functioning of society. To manage these problems, it is not enough to link the institutions of descending sovereignty with the ascending rights via corporation. The particular interests of citizens, which are integral elements of modern society, make the state take over responsibility in case the individuals are unable to satisfy their particular needs and cannot secure their own welfare. In an extreme situation like this, individuals experience that they are not just subjects of state authority, but recipients of its welfare function. The exercise of the *welfare function*, however, is not something external, received from the state as if from the outside or from above, but is based on the *citizens own activity*. It includes redistribution, what Hegel sees possible through the mediating organ of the state, the arrangements of public utility and taxation.³¹⁴ Hegel's doubtless brief treatment of the welfare state indicates, that the stability of the individual's particular lifeworld in the structurally unstable world of modernity was of vital importance for him.

³¹¹ R, 329 (§ 289).

³¹² R, 330 (§ 289).

³¹³ Cf. the analyses in §§ 264–271 of the *Philosophy of Right*. R, 287–305.

³¹⁴ Public authority provides for redistribution, so that individuals get their share of general resources. This is "contingent," however. The principle of own work as the base of resources and security is a key element of Hegel's conception. Cf. R, 261–263 (§§ 235–237).

CHAPTER FOUR

IDENTITY AND FORMS OF IDENTITY. SYMPTOMS OF THE CRISIS OF PERSONAL IDENTITY IN THE SOCIAL AND GENDER ROLE OF MAN

The spiritual bond [...] stands out as [...] exalted above the contingency of the passions.¹

Marriage [...] must take place [between] personalities of different origin.²

1. IDENTITY PROBLEMS AND THEIR INTERPRETIVE HORIZON IN THE MODERN WORLD

Hegel has not only understood and recognized the principle of free subjectivity in the modern age, but also depicted its unfolding/actualization with all its foreseeable consequences, including its negative effects on the lifeworld. We find in-depth analyses and basic considerations in Hegel which highlight the problematic phenomena of the existential, social, and private self-identity of the modern individual. The principle of free subjectivity is an unquestionable historical achievement; it has the principle of inwardness and the autonomy of the inner world as its parts, the latter being the *topos* of the personal aspects of self-identity.³ This topic and conceptual constellation is covered systematically by the world of morality and its perspective (the moral point of view. In the structural layers and typical phenomena of the development of free subjectivity as

¹ R, 202 (§ 163).

² R, 207–208 (§ 168).

³ The chapter on ethical life in the *Philosophy of Right* – and even the whole work – is often interpreted as a piece of political philosophy, neglecting the manifold character of Hegel's conception. Let us recall Taylor's critique: he saw a great hindrance to Hegel's reception in the fact that the debates on the *Philosophy of Right* have been determined by the inadequate opposition between liberalism and conservatism. See Taylor: *Hegel*, 374–375.

modern individuality, we can see signs that foreshadow the problematic of personal self-identity, and its tensions or even conflicts with identities connected to different social roles. However, the questions of the elements of personal identity, the inner world, the principle of inwardness, self-identity constituted as well as shattered in this world, the *symptoms and phenomena* signaling this process are all to be investigated and explained on a complex interpretive horizon pointing beyond the medium of morality. The Hegelian theory of modern society and the Hegelian conception of modern individuality, the systematic features of which I have reconstructed above, mark this interpretive horizon. In the following, I shall focus on symptoms and phenomena, and *not* on the *systematic components* of the interpretive horizon, although the systematic connections and systematic conceptuality cannot be dismissed when completing our task.

The major parameters of this *phenomenological-conceptual approach* are set by the *principle of infinitely free subjectivity* of the modern age, and the right to self-determination as an important intermediate element in the realization of this principle. The main text of the *right to self-determination* and the corresponding *right of the individuals to particularity* is to be found in morality. This right is empirically universal in the modern world: individuals – every individual and anyone – can claim and assert it. However, the fulfillment of the claim to realize this right, its actualization (*Verwirklichung*) can only be partly successful: it can and does encounter difficulties deriving from the structural features of the modern world. These difficulties can be both external and *internal*. One such difficulty may rise from the insufficient level of the individual's education or inclination to education, or the lack of rational conduct. Ruptures can appear between the individuals' idea of themselves and their real nature. Thus, *self-identity* is not given for the modern individual, but assigned as a *task*.

Education is of basic importance in the treatment of these ruptures, in mediations between idea(s) and existence(s) of the Self. This socio-cultural form does not only play a decisive role in shaping social identity (the consciousness and feeling of belonging to a family, the consciousness of the citizen), and identities linked with publicity (e.g., public opinion, legal culture, consciousness of the citizen), but also affects the formation of the individual's personal and private identity. The importance of personal identity with regard to the modern individual's personal existence (preserving its natural origin) and the inner world (directed towards

itself) is discussed by Hegel systematically in morality.⁴ The disturbance, its causes and typical phenomena are treated elsewhere in the objective spirit (family, civil society). It means that in Hegel's view, the signs of the crisis of personal identity can and should be interpreted in a socio-cultural context. In his analysis of the signs of crisis, he also pointed out the *dramatic character of modern human being's existence*. Modern existence is not tragic; tragedy only belongs to a brief period of ancient world and life. Modern existence is essentially dramatic, and at the same time reflective of this drama, which has a distancing effect on existence itself. This constraint of reflection, which becomes *explicit* in modern art and in philosophy of art, leads to the fact that the drama of modern existence gets mixed with *prosaic* or even *comic* features; what is more, in its reflective distance, existence itself becomes prosaic, or even comic.⁵

We can elucidate this interpretive horizon: Hegel exemplifies his diagnosis of modern individuality in such phenomena that manifest themselves in characteristic examples of genres of drama leading to irony, humor, or comedy.⁶ It is beyond doubt for him that the tragic does not only disintegrate in modern art, but first of all in its foundation, i.e., in modern life. This development leads to a point of view and conduct that Hegel sometimes calls irony, sometimes humor. Modern drama as a mediocre thing (Mittelding) depicts collisions arising out of the bourgeois mentality, which we know all too well from real life.⁷ Hegel reacts to this fact

⁴ Personal existence as individual life can be described by the categories of particularity in its natural aspects as well. Personal existence is also a component of the right to individual welfare as particular. As Hegel states in the framework of welfare: "The *particularity* of the interests of the natural will, taken together as a simple *totality*, is personal existence as *life*." R, 154 (§ 127). – Life is understood here as extending from natural existence to inner world. In morality, the main components of the inner world are the further determinations of self-reflection and self-determination based on the right of subjective freedom, namely the contents of actions as mine, resolution, intention, and conscience.

⁵ Cf. chapter C.III.4–5.

⁶ In the next to last paragraph of the chapter on morality, Hegel describes irony as a characteristic attitude of the modern individual, calling it the "culmination" of subjectivity. This subjectivity "declares itself absolute." R, 170 (§ 140). – Comedy and humor as a genre and structural element of modern dramatic poetry is also an object of the *Aesthetics*. Cf. chapter C.III.5.

⁷ There are "no more worthy plays" in modern times – remarks Hegel in the manuscript note to § 118, writing on the place of drama in modernity in context of art and lifeworld. See *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 221. – The topic of drama as a "mediocre thing" is presented in the *Aesthetics* in the context of dissolution of tragic collisions and the triumph of morality. In "modern tragedy it is generally the case that individuals do not act for the sake of the *substantial* nature of their end, nor is it that nature which proves

with irony, at times even with sarcasm. The stance and the conduct of the ancient heroes (Achilles) and great personalities (Creon and Antigone), or in a sense even of the knight (the hero of the dawn of modern age) offered firm ground for dramatic poetry. However, in modern (romantic) art all these lack validity. Rectitude (Rechtschaffenheit) becomes the prime virtue of the citizen, which integrates into a disposition and conduct that can be unhappy, but never heroic, tragic or poetic.⁸ An honest man finds satisfaction in his work or profession, which is not at all interesting in a dramatic sense.⁹ The prose of life rules modern existence and art as well.

These phenomena are not only characteristic of the state of art, but above all, of the relations in life that lie behind them. Hegel identifies the principle of infinite subjective freedom the greatest achievement of modernity as one of the basic causes of change. This principle, linked with every human being's right to self-determination, forecasts the *inflation of freedom*. If all individuals have the right to make decisions in all questions of their life, which affects both social and the personal identity, the greatness of character becomes endangered.¹⁰ In the light of this, it is no surprise that the chapters on morality and on the family in the *Philosophy of Right* mention modern drama as a problematic phenomenon of modern

to be their motive in their passion; on the contrary, what presses for satisfaction is the *subjectivity* of their heart and mind and the privacy of their own character." (A II, 1225.) In modern characters, we find vacillation and inner discord, which is "something now sad and painful, now aggravating" (A II, 1229.) He adds: "For once everything is shuffled into the moral disposition and the heart, there is no support any longer, given this subjectivity and strength of moral reflection, for a character." (A II, 1233.)

⁸ Rectitude is a normative element of modern society. Cf. R, 238–239 (§ 207), and 271–272 (§ 253).

⁹ Sacrificing actions to external powers and its "alien consequences" are discussed by Hegel in § 118 of the *Philosophy of Right*, where he says referring to the ancient tragedy that "heroic self-consciousness" "has not yet progressed from its unalloyed simplicity to reflect on the distinction between deed and action, between the external event and the purpose and knowledge of the circumstances, or to analyse the consequences minutely, but accepts responsibility for the deed in its entirety." R, 146. The manuscript notes analyse in detail the dissolution of the motive of "dramatic interest." There can be no more worthy plays in "modern times:" under bureaucratic and civil conditions, character is universal, which means it can be honest, honorable, but never really individual. Individual is contingent and not necessary, since there is no substantial to it. The opinion of others gains importance: it is however, not something substantial. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1986), 220–222.

¹⁰ The greatness of character is questioned by modern drama. Hegel returns to this topic several times in the historical context of art and in regard of the the genre of dramatic art.

art and modern life.¹¹ Questions of the philosophy of art come into contact with the problems of life, deeply affecting modern existence and its elements, including self-identity. It is a further evidence that relating the different elements of the Hegelian system to each other offers a fertile process for reconstructing the conception of individuality, while also having a promising extra meaning.

Hegel's standpoint outlined above is not just that of the observer. Starting from a strong normative ground, he attempts to find points of orientation, relying on which these negative occurrences of the forming of individuality in modernity can be not only explained but to a certain extent managed practically in the modern relations of life, in the framework of one's own life. It was obvious for him, that in modernity, ethical life as a substantial norm *cannot in itself* provide the firm ground (*feste Grundlegung*) and firm stance in life (*feste Stellung im Leben*) for the life-world and self-interpretation of the individual, that it could in traditional societies. He did not only refer to this in the *Preface* of the *Philosophy of Right*. Much earlier, the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* had already contrasted the pure ethical life of the ancients and the actual ethical life of the newer age.¹² This insight was illuminating in the prospect of the whole oeuvre. It urged Hegel to find a way out of the dead-end of substantial normativity, which has become disputed or in some fields – e.g., in abstract law and civil society – even invalid. This conceptional background helps to understand Hegel's idea that substantiality *and* subjectivity are two basic, closely interrelated structural elements of modern society.¹³ The mutual recognition and the mutual limitation of these two provided Hegel with the sole chance to stabilize the self-interpretation and self-determination, as well as the stance and conduct of modern individuals. This basic thought and its derivation: *complementarity* as the structural principle of the world of

¹¹ The concrete passage, § 118 focuses on the structural analysis of action, which offers promising opportunities for action-theoretical interpretations. Cf. Michael Quante, *Hegels Begriff der Handlung*. – It is interesting to note that we also find here important remarks on the theory of drama as well; e.g. in § 162 on the basis of modern marriage, the free consent of the persons. The “infinitely particular” asserts its rights, which is in connection with the subjective principle of the modern world. “But in those modern dramas and other artistic presentations in which love between the genders is the basic interest, we encounter a pervasive element of frostiness which is brought into the heat of the passion such works portray by the total *contingency* associated with it. For the whole interest is represented as resting solely upon *these* particular individuals. This may well be of infinite importance for *them*, but it is of no such importance *in itself*.” R, 202.

¹² Cf. chapter C.II.2.

¹³ Cf. chapter B.I.3.2.1. on modern ethical life.

the spirit constitutes the central structural feature of the *Philosophy of Right*.¹⁴ This in turn has a far-reaching effect on the treatment of the question of identity.

The import of this insight is that we can understand and justify the position, existence, and lifeworld of the modern individuals, as well as their concrete, single, changing situations from the perspective of basic structures confronting, but at the same time supplementing and legitimizing each other.¹⁵ We can understand now, why Hegel's theory of institutions cannot be reconstructed appropriately without his conception of subjectivity. Institutional structures, the special modern variants of substantiality (its objective order),¹⁶ and the structures of subjectivity together constitute the conceptual constellation that offers an appropriate interpretive horizon for the basic structures and motions of modernity, its collisions and signs of crisis, the topic of identity included.¹⁷

In exploring the problems of personal and social identity, proceeding from the modern principle of subjective freedom, the empirically universal right of self-determination, and the individual's right to particularity, Hegel bore in mind the treatment of these problems as well: he searched for patterns of conduct which correspond to this principle and these rights. And not only for philosophers, but for everybody. This was explicated in more detail in the *Preface* of the *Philosophy of Right*, in the *Preface* of the second edition of the *Encyclopedia*, and in the *Berlin Antrittsrede*.¹⁸ The need for a pattern of conduct arises from the very nature of modern existence: modern individual existence filled with divisions brings about the need for unification.¹⁹ This early motive broadens to a basic motive per-

¹⁴ Cf. chapter B.I.

¹⁵ To comprehend, justify, and preserve (*Begreifen*, *Rechtfertigen*, *Erhalten*) are the basic theoretical and practical elements of rational conduct, which Hegel discusses in their mutual dependence in the *Preface* of the *Philosophy of Right*. R, 22.

¹⁶ Cf. chapters A.I.5. and B.I.3.2.2.

¹⁷ Hegel makes the following remark on collisions as the operational principle of modern society: "Morality, ethics, and the interest of the state – each of these is a distinct variety of right, because each of them gives determinate shape and existence to *freedom*. They can come into *collision* only in so far as they are all in equal measure rights; if the moral point of view of the spirit were not also a right – i.e. freedom in one of its forms – it could not possibly come into collision with the right of personality or with any other right, because every right embodies the concept of freedom, the highest determination of spirit, in relation to which everything else is without substance. But a collision also contains this further moment: it imposes a limitation whereby one right is subordinated to another..." R, 59 (§ 30).

¹⁸ Cf. chapters A.I.5. and A.II.2.

¹⁹ Cf. chapter A.I.2.

meeting the whole oeuvre, and is immediately connected to the modern topic of identity crises and the search for identity. The young Hegel tried to find the appropriate pattern of conduct in love, the mature Hegel, in reconciliation with actuality, God, others, and ourselves.²⁰ It still remains questionable, whether he really found in this a remedy for the crisis of modern individuality.

The universal principle of freedom, the right to self-determination and the right to particularity as the basic elements of modern existence, called into question the traditional, taken for granted personal and social forms of identity and the forms of conduct that served as their basis; at the same time, a new claim to valid patterns of conduct and forms of identity has arisen. The requirement of a valid pattern of conduct presents a universal feature, in opposition with the individual's right to particularity. This shows in itself the internal contradictions of modern existence, which remain unsolved even in our times. Hegel's analysis brings to light collisions such as the one between the formalism and universal-abstract character of modern freedom on the one hand, and the individually relevant, particular contentual features based on a self-approved pattern of conduct on the other.

Hegel refers to practical attitude in the *Preface to the Philosophy of Right* as one that not only comprehends but also preserves subjective freedom in modern life.²¹ This is made possible in the rational relation to actuality, also described here with the metaphor of reconciliation. This is the recommended conduct not just for the philosopher but to everyone else, including individuals with an ordinary thinking, leading a simple life. The normative contentual character and the basic motive of the Hegelian standpoint – the recognition and preservation of subjective freedom – can be interpreted as a distanced identification with modernity, which is realized through a theoretical, understanding behavior and a preserving practical one. Nonetheless, reconciliation – with its emphatically Christian origins – seems to be too abstract a model very far from actual situations

²⁰ The life-oriented attitude of the young Hegel implied a preference for love; the mature Hegel's orientation towards actuality led him to prefer reconciliation. Cf. Otto Pöggeler, "Hegels Phänomenologie des Selbstbewußtseins," in *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 231–257. – The aim of the present discussion is to show that the problems of life, and "practical emotions" attached to them – e.g. love in an ethical or artistic context, marriage as disposition or as an object of romantic works of art – remain important elements in the mature conception of the spirit.

²¹ R, 22 (Preface).

in life. As such, it can hardly offer a universal solution for the identity problems mentioned above and to be examined in more detail later.

The next discussion focuses on the following points: 1. shapes of individuality and forms of identity in the text of the *Philosophy of Right*, 2. the changes in the shape of modern individuality at the intersection of the abstract aspects and social-practical contexts of identity, 3. personal and social identity in the family's feeling of unity and symptoms of crisis in the modern family, illustrated by the case of man.

2. SHAPES OF INDIVIDUALITY AND FORMS OF IDENTITY IN THE TEXT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT

The historical status of subjectivity can be explained by the basic principle of newer, or modern age. The origins of infinite free subjectivity can be traced back internally to Christianity, externally to the Roman world. The following statement is from § 185 of the *Philosophy of Right*:

the principle of the self-sufficient and inherently infinite personality of the individual (Prinzip der *selbstständigen in sich unendlichen Persönlichkeit* des Einzelnen), the principle of subjective freedom, which arose in an inward form in the Christian religion and in an external form (which was therefore linked with abstract universality) in the Roman world, is denied its right in that merely substantial form of the actual spirit. This principle is historically later than the Greek world, and the philosophical reflection which can fathom these depths is likewise later than the substantiality of Greek philosophy.²²

Subjectivity has different systematic conceptual shapes, as it becomes manifest in Hegel's terminology. In a narrow sense, subject is the subject-shape of morality. In a comprehensive sense, it is the other principle of the spirit, as opposed to substance. This subject unfolds itself in different historical and individual forms, formations and phenomena: it becomes concrete in the Hegelian sense. In the *Philosophy of Right*, the main text of practical philosophy it has the primary meaning of *practical individuality*, which unites all practical motivations, ends and activities in the comprehensive concept of the "*will*."²³

²² R, 223 (§ 185).

²³ Let us remember that the subjective spirit is relevant for this topic as well. According to the linear structure of the system, the willing subject is to be found at the intersection of subjective and objective spirit, and – within subjective spirit – at the intersection of theoretical and practical spirit. These latter forms constitute the two comprehensive basic

The system of the *Philosophy of Right* explicates the topic of the subject in a number of consecutive steps. Thus, the comprehensive-integrated shape of practical individuality is constituted – so to speak – en route, pointing beyond the objective spirit, to the subjective spirit and the absolute spirit. Following the passage on practical spirit in the subjective spirit, the first step is the pure activity of the willing Self, its movement from the subject as Self through *this* particular human being to subjectivity.²⁴ This movement is pure activity, which will be contextualized in relation to the contents of individual activities. The second contextualization of activities takes place in the practical-social fields where the forms, formations and degrees of the subject get articulated. The *dual structure of differentiation and identity* is the ordering principle of these changes of shape. The socio-cultural dimensions and components of practical activities can be explored in this perspective. In other words, Hegel approaches the crucial question of the individual's self-identity *not only from the principle of inwardness*, but first of all from the viewpoint of *practical activities and their corresponding socio-cultural contexts (norms, institutions, customs, forms of contact, e.g., mutual recognition)*. Identity – including the individual's self-identity – is primarily a basic feature belonging to practical activities and socio-cultural contexts. However, practical activity is always a manifestation – self-manifestation – of subject-shapes. The central figure of the Hegelian theory of the subject is individuality interpreting and determining itself in its activities. Here we can identify the Faustian nature of European character. However, the Hegelian subject is also an *intersubject*: an individual interpreting and determining oneself in one's forms of contact, which is of special importance in the socio-cultural context.

Now we are talking about the activities and manifestations of the subject contextualized in the objective spirit. In abstract law, the formative factor of identity is “mine” in its relation to things. In morality, moral subjectivity exercises this function in relation to itself, in the forms of self-reflection and self-determination. In abstract law, “mine” is in something external, in property or in contract. In contrast, the subject of morality finds itself in “mine” as in something internal, like intention, resolution, or ends: these are the various closer forms of its self-interpretation and

types of activities. This conceptual constellation is the basis of practical-social activities thematized in the objective spirit, which can be utilized in the discussion of practices as well.

²⁴ Cf. R, 37–39 (§ 5). The question is treated in detail by Quante, “Die ‘Persönlichkeit des Willens’ und das ‘Ich als Dieses,’” 53–67.

self-determination. These forms are components of my self-determination and self-interpretation, and thereby my *own* self-identity. In the family, the first socio-cultural shape of ethical life, subjects realize and live their identity in the feeling of unity as members of a community. In the linear structure of the system, it is the first basic form of social identity. The subject of the identity belonging to civil society as the second socio-cultural shape is the citizen as bourgeois (Bürger), who acts in intersubjective-cooperational forms (collaboration with others, mutual recognition) and lives in institutional frameworks (corporation, administration of justice); who, however, is unable to overcome the collisions of modern civil society. Stable identity is not to be expected in this world and in this subject-shape. It is no accident, that this is the only sphere in the whole territory of the spirit, where no mention is – or can be – made of reconciliation.²⁵ That is why the private sphere of the family is of utmost importance for the question of the citizen's self-identity, who thinks of himself as both a *private person* and a *substantial person*, and behaves accordingly. The citizen is not identical to the concrete person, the first form of subjectivity in civil society. Everyone is a concrete person: everyone has particular needs, the fulfillment of which is a precondition of one's existence. Not everyone is a citizen, though: the concrete person *can become* a citizen in the intersubjective process of satisfying needs (division of labor, the cooperative forms of satisfying needs) through socio-cultural mediation (education) and institutional mechanisms (corporation, administration of justice). The citizen is the concrete person contextualizing him or herself. The major elements of social (political and legal) forms of identity attainable in the state are: 1. communal political activity in the conscious conduct of the citizen, linked with substantial feeling 2. participation in public opinion, 3. the legal consciousness and legal culture of the individuals. To put it differently, Hegel conceived of social self-identity as a differentiated structure that comprehends the whole spectrum of social, economic and political spheres, and their corresponding activities and subject-shapes, offering universal-normative and at the same time, contentual, complex-practical points of orientation for the current shape and

²⁵ Waszek examines the Hegelian analysis of British economics from the aspect of Hegel's practical philosophy, which can be described as a duality of separation and reconciliation. Cf. Norbert Waszek, *The Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel's Account of Civil Society* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988). – It is worth noting that civil society is the only sphere in Hegel, where tensions are impossible to overcome, and reconciliation has no role whatsoever. Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, "Das Prinzip der Besonderheit in Hegels Wirtschaftsphilosophie," in *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Aktivität*, 184, 199, 205–206.

activity of the individual in a variety of private and public territories. This brief overview points to the fact that in the case of the modern individual, we can and should always speak of *identities*, and not identity. The labor model, revived by Honneth, who relies on Marx and critical theory, or the model of satisfying needs, is insufficient *in itself* to elucidate the Hegelian view of social identity.²⁶ All this manifests once more the practical realism of Hegel (Pippin).²⁷

3. THE CHANGES ON THE SHAPE OF MODERN INDIVIDUALITY AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE ABSTRACT ASPECTS AND SOCIAL-PRACTICAL CONTEXTS OF IDENTITY

The subject has multiple meanings in the *Philosophy of Right* as the system of practical-objective spirit, in accordance with the linear and circular structures of the system.²⁸ It is in conformity with the arrangement of the objective spirit as not just an institutional world, but a special constellation of subject-shapes and forms of subjectivity as well as objective-institutional entities at all levels. Objective spirit is a complex of relations between contentually substantial, formally subjective formations. Hegel elucidates this structural articulation of the problem of the subject in the remark to § 190 of the *Philosophy of Right*, although at first sight the

²⁶ The suggestion of Honneth that labor plays an eminent role in the social lifeworld, in the organization of everyday life, and as a center of identity-formation, does not seem relevant in Hegel's conception. It holds for Marx's theory, but hardly in the case of Hegel. He placed the satisfaction of needs in the center of modern economic and social theory, not labor. Cf. Axel Honneth, "Arbeit und Anerkennung: Versuch einer Neubestimmung," in *Anerkennung*, 213–228. – In Hegel, taking the complexity of identities into consideration is the appropriate procedure.

²⁷ Pippin uses the term "practical realism" in linking the conception of rational action to the context of ethical life. This interpretation is based on the thesis that Hegel's theory of freedom is also a theory of rational action. This makes Hegel part of a tradition extending from Rousseau, Kant and Fichte to Rawls and Habermas. Robert Pippin, "Hegels Praktischer Realismus: Rationales Handeln als Sittlichkeit," in *Hegels Erbe*, 295. – The most important for our purpose is the idea that individuals do not formulate their intentions in a "solipsistic" way, since this act is limited by social conventions. Ibid., 321. – The socio-cultural embeddedness of activities (motivations and practices) and corresponding identities are emphasized in the same volume by Brandom, McDowell, Moyer, and Pinkard, in a way which is relevant for the present discussion as well.

²⁸ Hegel introduces the logical determinations of subjectivity in the practical-philosophical context of the will in the Introduction of the *Philosophy of Right*. That is to say, subjectivity is not to be taken here as a logical concept, but in a spirit-philosophical/practical-philosophical sense. Cf. R, 56 (§ 26).

passage seems simply to enumerate a successive set of isolated subject-shapes, a typical case of linear system. As the remark says:

In right, the object is the *person*; at the level of morality, it is the *subject*, in the family, the *family-member*, and in civil society in general, the *citizen* (in the sense of *bourgeois*). Here, at the level of needs [...] it is that *concretum of representational thought* which we call *the human being*.²⁹

The original term Standpunkt (translated as “level” in the above passage), calls attention to the *relations* of the mentioned determinations and formations, leading the argument from the linear structure (the chain of the forms of subjectivity) to the relational structure. This relational structure expresses the fact that the basic structure of the objective spirit is constituted by *bipolar, colliding relations* of institutions (law, civil society, state) and subject-formations (person, subjectivity, family-member, citizen as bourgeois and citizen). Law and person, morality and subjectivity, family and family member, civil society and bourgeois, state and citizen are *particular* relations of substantial entities *and* forms of subjectivity at every level, and in every shape of objective practical spirit.

On the one hand, we have two parallel lines: the line of person, subjectivity, family member, bourgeois and citizen, which is a succession of subject-shapes that reflect our practical activities as a series of self-determinations. Here, the modern subject presents itself as a complex of its activities and self-determinations, engaged in practical-social contexts and institutional frameworks. This is the model of Hegelian practical individuality. However, this synthesizing form of subjectivity can only be reconstructed by exploring the internal dimensions of the system, its linear and circular structures, and their interrelations.

I am a person in relation to abstract law, I am a member of a family (or more than one?), I have a profession in society, I have the right to self-determination, which involves my right to my own particular lifeworld and inner world, while I also have the right to be a free citizen in my relation to the state (based on the rule of law). All these relations belong to me, as well as to every other single individual in modern society. I *am* a complex of these relations, which are at the same time *components of my own life*. First, I live within these endowments of my existence without reflecting to them. Still, I can *know* that it is so. Hegel attributes various forms of knowledge to the subject's various forms of existence. Feeling,

²⁹ R, 228 (§ 190).

emotion, representational thought, faith, disposition, insight, conscience, and confidence are special subjective forms, through which I relate and reflect to the object of my activities: other people and myself.

A third element, supplementing these existential and epistemic forms is expressed by Hegel in the formula "*I want*." This formula comprehends all forms of practical activities and practical conduct of subject-shapes. The integrative concept of practical individuality (the will) is expressed in a threefold relation (*I am, I know, I want*), as the basic subjective structure of the whole sphere of the practical as such.³⁰

This three-fold conceptual constellation is of crucial importance for the elucidation of Hegel's theory of individuality. This conceptual constellation is subjective in so far as the institutional world, which also belongs to the field of practice, is not investigated here. These three forms of relations serve as points of orientation for all of the above mentioned socially contextualized subject-shapes, since all of them contains the Self (the willing Self) as the first, not yet contextualized subject-shape possessing these potential orientations. The question of the Self's identity exposed in this threefold conceptual constellation surfaces in socially contextualized subject-shapes, in relation to their own individual being and self-interpretation. And although the endlessly broad individual character and infinite articulation of personal and social self-identity in modernity (the variety of identities) seems to be a gain with respect to the principle of subjective freedom, it is also a great burden and responsibility for the individuals. *No one can ever be completely sure of who one really is.*³¹

So far we have dealt with the problem of self-identity focusing on the *Philosophy of Right*. Hegel, however, raised this issue much earlier, in close connection with Hölderlin's idea of unification, which would soon

³⁰ Let us remember the Hegelian formula in the manuscript note to § 105 of the *Philosophy of Right*: "der Wille ist frei, er weiß, daß er frei ist, er will sich frei." Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, 203.

³¹ Examining the therapeutic aspects of Hegel's philosophy, Pinkard makes the following statement: "We are always both 'inside' and 'outside' ourselves in that, being self-interpreting animals, we are 'absolute negativity,' always concerned with whether we have measured up to our 'concept' of ourselves and with whether the activities in which we 'carry on' our lives in our institutional setups is true, or even whether the self to which we are supposed to be true (in the modern ideal of authenticity) is itself our 'real,' true self. That worry is not adequately satisfied by simply pointing to the human 'form of life,' since our organic human nature is the same for all of us, but our grasp of that what that means, with how we are to take it, is not determined by that nature." Pinkard, "Innen, Außen und Lebensformen: Hegel und Wittgenstein," in *Hegels Erbe*, 283–4.

become their common philosophical program.³² In the *Philosophy of Right*, he assigns systematically explicated, practical-social meanings to the problem of identity, preceded by and based on a general structure in the conceptual triad of *I am – I know – I will*.³³ This general structure is linked with the abstract Self as abstract subject-shape, which appeared in the subjective spirit, and reincarnated in the first, willing Self of the objective spirit. This form of subjectivity, in its immediate unreflected state of existence, is immediately identical with itself and its immediate environment. However, this mode of identity has come to an end, which is the result of a long and complicated process. A differentiation takes place in the universal-abstract practical conduct, characterized by the “I will” formula. However, this differentiation of practical conduct on the general-abstract level goes on in a number of practical-social areas. The first abstract subject, the threefold relation of the Self (I am, I know, I want) attains further determinations in the process of socio-cultural contextualization in the spheres and subject-shapes of law, morality, family, civil society and the state: the Self interprets and determines itself as legal person, moral subjectivity, bourgeois, or citizen. *Abstract-universal self-identity as the first form of identity of practical-objective spirit is superseded or supplemented by the multiple constellation of differentiating, therefore particular socio-cultural identities.*

Hegel distinguishes within the practical-objective spirit three basic and comprehensive *orientations* of identity: the identity of the subject with the *object* (the object of its activities); the identity of the subject with the *substantial* (the higher content of its activities); and the *identity* of the subject with *itself*. The *personal* identification of the subject as a legal person with the object as property constitutes “mine” as a formation of abstract law, and at the same time a *social* form of identity in the legal system and the administration of justice. The personal identification of the subject with the substantial in the shapes of the bourgeois and the citizen is a basic formation of ethical life: these *forms of identity are both social and personal*. The interiorized forms of educated knowledge are: the ethical feeling of love in the case of the family member, mutual recognition in the case of the bourgeois, the ethical feeling of patriotism and legal culture in the case of the citizen; as such, these are constituents of social or (as in the case of the family member) personal self-identity. The subject’s identity with itself – i.e. *personal identity* – is the ideal typical formation of

³² Cf. chapter A.I.2.

³³ Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 105, manuscript note, 203.

morality, whose subject is guided by self-reflection (the concretization of *I know* and self-determination (the concretization of *I will*).³⁴

A consequence of the differentiation of activities, spheres of life and actuality into self-sufficient entities (a characteristic of the modern world) is the enrichment of the individual's life conduct and life-contents. Hegel has a definitively positive opinion of the right of the separated subjects of the single, separated socio-cultural spheres as a normative point of orientation: each stage in the development of the Idea of freedom has its right, because it is the existence of freedom in one of its own determinations.³⁵ On the other hand, the separation of these spheres and subject-shapes causes collisions and has negative effects as well. Separation shows signs of division and fragmentation in the modern spheres of actuality and life. This in turn lays burden on the individuals, since these phenomena – ever more widespread in modernity – make their life and conduct more complicated and controversial. The disturbances of personal and social identity are consequences of this complex change. Hegel uses the *example of the man* to shed light on this set of problems.

In what follows, I will focus on the Hegelian conception of marriage and the family, but only with regard to the form of identity the family could or should provide, although it is decreasingly able to do so. This limitation does not mean that identity problems discussed in morality are unimportant. On the contrary, in the background of the Hegelian conception of the family, we find his understanding of morality, his theory of abstract law and other parts of ethical life, as well as the forms of identity investigated in them. This complex and dynamic systemic structure serves as a basis when exploring our topic.

4. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL IDENTITY IN THE “UNITY OF FEELING” IN THE FAMILY, AND THE CRISIS OF MODERN FAMILY – ON THE EXAMPLE OF MAN

Family has a special relevance for the Hegelian conception of subjectivity. In it, we can find in a concentrated form the characteristics of the

³⁴ It is well known that identity is a great topic of German idealism. The Hegelian meaning of identity is rooted in this tradition, which he himself acknowledges in the *Differenzschrift*. The normative character and philosophical content of the Hegelian philosophical attitude to identity (the orientation of divided individual existence towards unity) leads back to Hölderlin's program of unification. In the *Philosophy of Right*, identity has a primarily practical-social meaning, as we stress in the present work.

³⁵ R, 59 (§ 30).

individual's right to particularity as the basic feature of morality, the right to self-determination as the key element of morality, and moral personal existence as inner world on the one hand; and the elements and effects of civil society and its collisions on the other. All these in relation to both social and personal identity. The justification of traditional gender roles is not Hegel's only point, as it is often suggested.³⁶ Hegel had a concern for a number of problematic features in the modern way of life. One of these is the social and gender role that man plays in modern civil society. Of course, he could not foresee later developments like the emancipation of women and its effects on marriage and the family. However, through the example of man, he drew attention to some typical phenomena of modern private life filled with tensions; these phenomena (the symptoms of the crisis of marriage and the family in the twentieth century) touch the social and gender role of women as well.

With regard to the social and gender role of man, Hegel calls attention to man's *division* with himself and the external world. Man has taken the task of representing the family as its head

The family as a legal person in relation to others must be represented by the husband as its head. In addition, he is primarily responsible for external acquisition and for caring for the family's needs, as well as for the control and administration of the family's resources. These are common property, so that no member of the family has particular property, although each has a right to what is held in common. This right and the control of the resources by the head of the family may, however, come into collision, because the ethical disposition of the family is still immediate (see § 158) and exposed to particularization and contingency.³⁷

It is interesting to note, that while describing this essentially traditional role of man, Hegel also points to the tension that may result from the family members *right to particularity* in ethical life, the subjective foundation of the modern family. Man's status as the head of the family is endangered by this right of the modern individual, which is in principle *every family*

³⁶ The most scandalous statements (e.g., that women may well be educated, but they are not made for the higher sciences, for philosophy and certain artistic productions) are found neither in the main text of § 166, nor in the remark, but in the dubiously authentic addition. The main text and the remark show no signs of underestimating women, it is rather a delicate analysis of gender roles. Hegel's interpretation of womanhood is based on the character of Antigone, who expresses the law of woman as opposed to that of man. Her shortcomings are presented not from the aspect of traditional male roles, but of a modern conception of the individual: Antigone lacks inwardness, the "law of emotive and subjective substantiality." R, 206 (§ 166).

³⁷ R, 209 (§ 171).

member's right. Hegel exalts the division of man's status almost to the level of the manly principle of the *Phenomenology*, when the comparison of the two genders turns out to be unequivocally advantageous for man.³⁸ Man's predominance is no doubt a weakness of the Hegelian diagnosis of modern marriage and family. Emphasizing the separation of gender roles, he describes man as powerful and active possessing personal self-sufficiency and a knowledge of free universality otherwise in work and struggle with the external world and with himself, so that it is only through his division that he fights his way to self-sufficient unity with himself. In the family, he has a peaceful intuition of this unity, and an emotive and subjective ethical life.³⁹

Nevertheless, Hegel's reinforcement of the traditional model does not alter the fact that what he describes in this passage is the internal contradiction of the modern role of man. For division as the manly principle is the counter-concept of identity, which he defines as self-sufficient unity with himself (*selbstständige Einigkeit mit sich*). Division is the basic feature of man's existence in modernity. It could be overcome in an ideal sense in self-sufficient unity with himself, which would be the adequate form of man's self-identity: he could find in it the foundation of his existence, his social and family status. This modern model of self-identity is a complex one: it is personal and private in so far as it is tied to the family, but at the same time it involves one's role and profession in civil society. However, fulfilling professional duties is insufficient in itself: the desired unity of personal *and* social identity outlined in the Hegelian model of self-identity cannot be achieved solely by exercising one's profession (no matter how well). The inclusion of modern family life, the private sphere is indispensable for the formation of this double-rooted self-identity. Hegel in fact goes further: in the sphere of private life, man must have the opportunity to overcome his division with himself, which he experiences in his profession, or in public life, and which he may not be able to solve there. Self-identity as unity with himself (*Einigkeit mit sich*) and its peaceful intuition can be granted by the family. Of course, this identity is only made possible if wife, marriage, and family all fulfill their mission.

Hegel had no doubts, however, that things can happen another way. It is no accident that as early as the second paragraph of the chapter on the family, he makes some remarks on the dissolution of marriage. As he

³⁸ R, 206–207 (§ 166).

³⁹ R, 206 (§ 166).

says, the family begins to dissolve when members [of the family] become, in their disposition and actuality, like self-sufficient persons.⁴⁰ How does Hegel come to make this statement in such a crucial passage?

Self-identity has a tight connection to the modern feeling and principle of inwardness, the importance of which is highlighted by Hegel in morality and the family. To further elucidate this point, let us think of the concept of the person who finds himself in something external in abstract law. The person given in abstract law finds the framework, object and way of interpretation of the outside world and of his own self-determination. He is related to others through relating to the thing, e.g., to his partner in contractual relation. With regard to the distinction between lawful and unlawful, Hegel introduces here recognition which presents *intersubjectivity* as the key element of Hegel's theory of subjectivity. The Hegelian social model of intersubjectivity is mutual recognition. Although its origins can be traced back to Kant and Fichte, it was Hegel who elaborated it as a model of social relations.⁴¹ Here, however, in abstract law, a thing or a partner belonging to a contractual relation do not meet the criteria of the modern subject's self-identity: the normative and practical aspects of mutual recognition. The territory of self-identity is the inner world: personal as well as social identification are only possible on this ground. Modern individual posits everything as his own – in his inwardness. This is the principle of morality. That is why self-identity is linked in every relation with spheres which contain inwardness as their own structural element. It holds especially in the case of such spheres as morality and family. In this respect, mutual recognition is an act of self-consciousness.⁴²

⁴⁰ R, 200 (§ 159).

⁴¹ Intersubjectivity is a key element of Hegel's theory of subjectivity. The social model of intersubjectivity is mutual recognition. Although it has its origins in Kant and Fichte, it has been elaborated as a model of social connections by Hegel. See Ludwig Siep, "Toleranz und Anerkennung bei Kant und im Deutschen Idealismus," in *Aktualität und Grenzen der praktischen Philosophie Hegels*, 77–87. – See also Ludwig Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip der praktischen Philosophie: Untersuchungen zu Hegels Jenaer Philosophie des Geistes* (Freiburg: Alber, 1979), Axel Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit Eine Reaktualisierung der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), and *Anerkennung*, ed. Hans-Cristoph Schmidt am Busch, and Christopher F. Zurn (Berlin: Akademie, 2009).

⁴² Brandom raises important issues regarding self-consciousness and the Hegelian social model of subjectivity as intersubjectivity: "To be a subject, or consciousness means the same for Hegel as for Kant: to be a subject of normative constitution, not just by desires but by obligations as well." He adds, that self-consciousness is not only a recognition of others but also of oneself, whereby it is also possession of a self-conception. Self-consciousness attained by the social act of mutual recognition is called by Brandom "robust self-consciousness." This structure makes conceivable Hegel's formula of the I as

The requirement and need of self-identity occurs primarily when and because life and actuality are filled with collisions. Therefore, in the case of man's identity, they cannot be overcome in a political-substantial way, as in the case of Creon. One way to establish self-identity is offered by morality, one of the central fields of the inner world. Self-identity concentrating solely on the inner world, however, leads to *bel esprit*-mentality, which Hegel sharply criticizes from the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* on. Another kind of identity is available in the family, which does not have subjectivity as self-oriented individual at his center, but a sort of community, which exists in ethical disposition (*sittliche Gesinnung*) as "*substantial subjectivity*." This twofold structure offers an important opportunity for identification, even if in itself, it does not fulfill the modern individual's claim to self-identity.

Hegel balances between modern and traditional family. On the one hand, he would like to safeguard traditional values and value orientations.⁴³ On the other hand, as a realistic thinker and a sober analyzer of his age, he establishes a surprisingly apt diagnosis of the crisis of modern marriage and family. It is beyond doubt for him, that the individual's right to particularity and self-determination, as well as the right of my own knowledge and volition are the basic rights of modern individuality, which should be respected and reserved as such. These rights, however, cannot be separated from family life, from the private sphere: on the contrary, these rights affect the private section of life as well. The individual's fundamental right to their particularity, which has its roots in the principle of modern subjective freedom and in the right to self-determination, finds the appropriate space to realize itself in the *normative and inner world of morality* and the *practical spheres of civil society*. This right in turn affects private life, marriage, and the family as well, where morality in itself does not provide sufficient ground. In an extreme case, the right to particularity can threaten family belonging, which cannot be managed solely in the medium of morality and its inner world.

Hegel thereby points out that *for structural contentual reasons*, family can become unstable in the modern world. How should we understand this statement? In Hegel's view, family is not just an institution regulated by laws and blessed by the church; even though the elements of

we and the we as I from the *Phenomenology*. Brandom, "Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution," in *Hegels Erbe*, 74–76.

⁴³ Cf. R, 206–207 (§ 166).

institutionalization and sanctity do belong to marriage in Hegel's conception.⁴⁴ Hegel assigns to family as an institution such elements as property (its material basis), and the upbringing of children. Still, marriage and family is more than just an institution: it is a *common space and form of life* for people who understand and determine themselves as members of the family, and behave accordingly. Man, woman, wife, husband, father, mother, children are all subjects of this shared space and form of life; their common feature being that they are family-members. In this sense, Hegel attached to the family a meaning in the lifeworld, which is logical in the framework of the objective spirit.⁴⁵ The lifeworld dimension of the family means and expresses the sharing of the whole of individual existence and the strained world of the communal and the individual.

This sharing of the *whole of individual existence* is both "*disposition and actuality*."⁴⁶ In other words, Hegel treats the family in the context of the lifeworld as a complex of certain personal and social forms of existence, as well as subjective forms of consciousness.⁴⁷ Disposition, feeling, emotion, confidence or love are forms of consciousness, but also have a determined mode of existence as (lived) emotion and disposition: they are the forms of both personal *and* communal existence. (A good example of the Hegelian concept of the subject as intersubject is marriage, in which different persons make themselves one.)⁴⁸ These subjective forms of existence and knowledge refer back to the inner world which is an important field for the actualization of self-identity. We experience love as the basic relation between husband and wife or between family-members without reflection, and it becomes the center of our inner world as such. The family, as the *immediate substantiality* of spirit, has as its determination the spirit's *feeling* of its own unity, which is *love*.⁴⁹ However, we have to leave the

⁴⁴ For the sanctity of marriage and its decline in modern marriage, see R, 203 (§ 163).

⁴⁵ In § 163, Hegel brings to the fore immediately the lifeworld aspect of the family. Substantial, communal, value-oriented "spiritual bond" asserts its right in the community of the "whole individual existence" as well. This individual and at the same time communal mode of existence is to be taken both as disposition and actuality. R, 202 (§ 163).

⁴⁶ R, 202 (§ 163).

⁴⁷ Hegel argues against Kant that marriage cannot be subsumed under the concept of contract. The intrusion of contractual relationships and relationships concerning private property into the individuals' relationship to the state has created the greatest confusion in constitutional law and in actuality. R, 105 (§ 75).

⁴⁸ Marriage is not a contractual relationship, because its essence is being a single, self-subsistent person, which derives from the fact that different personalities unite by their own decision and choice. This identification makes the family one person, whose members are "accidents" – but only because of their own decision. R, 203 (§ 163).

⁴⁹ R, 199 (§ 158).

immediacy of inner self-consciousness i.e., unreflected love. The state of being in love must develop into self-conscious love in an ethical sense.⁵⁰ This movement and transformation becomes manifest in disposition, which has two levels.

Identity in the family is first given in a feeling, subjective form as the unity and concord of the members. This is the first shape of disposition. *Subjective disposition* refers to inwardness as a peculiar inner world, that the family-members have. This world, however, exactly because it is subjective, is constantly exposed to the contingency and arbitrariness of emotions and attractions. In addition, subjective disposition expresses the more or less latent claim of individuals to the right to particularity, and contains those natural affections that may transgress the borders of marriage. That is how the signs of insecurity and instability of marriage appear in the subjective disposition as a structural element of personal (familial) social identity. In contrast, *ethical disposition* and self-conscious love are not immediate forms of feelings, but are linked with such reflective forms as conscience and rational insight. This second disposition can influence the stance and conduct of husband and wife or of the family-members through the mentioned reflective forms, and can orientate the intentions and contents of conduct by ethical norms. The substantial aspect of disposition points out that the subject of family is neither a person for itself nor subjectivity taken in its comprehensive particularity, but an individual, who – giving up his or her particularity – understands and determines himself or herself as the member of a unity, and behaves accordingly.

From this aspect, we can see that for Hegel, the identity-creating element of marriage and the family, the feeling of unity is a complex structure: a special constellation of natural affection, subjective and arbitrary components on one side, and of substantial elements on the other. In this sense the second shape of disposition is the more complex, higher form of identity formation of feeling subjective substantiality. The foundation of family is exactly this feeling subjective substantiality which – as a substantiality – can provide the family and its members with a proper identity and internal as well as external stability. At the same time, modern family has its risks, too. The firm ground of individual existence has become problematic in the modern form of family due to structural causes.

⁵⁰ Cf. R, 201 (§ 161). "Leidenschaftliche Liebe und Ehe ist zweierlei" – as Hegel writes in the manuscript note to § 162. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, 312.

That is why we need to find a structure that has the opposite effect. Hegel thought to have found it in feeling subjective substantiality.

Hegel has not only established a diagnosis, but attempted to find a solution to strengthen the family, even at the price of supporting traditional roles. At the same time he confronted the typical phenomena of modern marriage and family, and understood that it was not the institutional elements that needed stabilization, but rather the subjective components of marriage and the family. He emphasized the ethical disposition in this context, as an identity-forming element in the family – in order to reinforce the institution of marriage and the family. He was of the opinion, that the different rights and claims of modern individuals must be recognized, if necessary, against inappropriate institutions as well.⁵¹

The respect for the individual's right to self-determination is expressed by the fact that the individual has to make decision freely to marry. Hegel lays stress on the free consent of persons to constitute a single person in the bond of marriage. This is the objective origin of marriage, in contrast to subjective origin such as particular inclination or the foresight of the parents.⁵² In this decision, individuals give up their right to particularity. The free decision of the persons involved is a sort of guarantee that protects marriage and the family against those factors that could, in themselves, destroy them: merely subjective disposition, the particular inclination of the two persons, natural affection, or the arbitrariness of being in love. Hegel is of the opinion, that the essence of marriage is the conscious self-limitation of the persons. The ethical feature of marriage consists in the conscious decision and self-limitation of its members. Therefore, marriage is one of the important socio-cultural form of self-determination. In practice, it means that I have to be able to decide freely and be persistent in my decision. This is why Hegel rejects parents' right to make decisions

⁵¹ It is one of the great topics of *Hegels Erbe*. Analysing the interconnections between Hegel's theory of ethical life and his theory of freedom as a theory of rational action, Pippin points out that the elements of actions go beyond the action spheres of single individuals. – Brandom emphasizes that institutions are basic elements of Hegel's theory of modernity. Moya introduces the formula of Hegel's complementary model of individuals and institutions. Comparing Kant's and Hegel's views, McDowell concludes that they represent two versions of the same basic idea: Hegel worked out the social version of how we give laws to ourselves. Law giving does not work on the level of single individuals, therefore a social context is needed. Law giving presents a complex social achievement: we have to bring down Kant's rational ideas from heaven to earth. See McDowell, "Selbstbestimmende Subjektivität und externer Zwang," in *Hegels Erbe*, 205–206.

⁵² R, 201 (§ 162).

about their children's marriage.⁵³ Such cases would eliminate the right of self-determination and identification with one's own decision.⁵⁴ The above reasons lead Hegel to integrate free choice as a manifestation of modern subjective freedom into the ethical-subjective structural elements of marriage.

This, however, does not mean that marriage is not dissoluble at all. In § 159, Hegel remarks that marriage can dissolve, if the members [of the family] become, in their disposition and actuality, like self-sufficient persons.⁵⁵ The self-sufficiency of persons may be restored by divorce. Hegel repeats this statement in § 176: just as there can be no compulsion to marry, so also can there be no merely legal or positive bond which could keep the partners together once their dispositions and actions have become antagonistic and hostile.⁵⁶ He adds, however, that divorce is only permissible in case of total estrangement.

Our reconstruction of Hegel's position on the question of personal and social identity made it clear how deeply and many-sidedly he discussed this complicated and sensitive issue. He examined forms of identity and their problematic consequences in the context of practical activities and institutional forms belonging to the spheres of modernity, as well as of the inner world and lifeworld of individuals. He illustrated his considerations with phenomena representing the collisions between the various spheres of life and inner worlds that can call into question or undermine personal and social forms of individual self identity.

Hegel's position sheds light on many problems of modern individuality and identity. Inner world is an internal constituent of subjectivity, and free subjectivity with its rights is an indisputable historical achievement. This achievement, however, is filled with contradictions, showing the limits of individual existence in the modern age. In his analysis of the family, Hegel called attention to some ideal-typical phenomena which express *the constant contestation of the individual's self-identity*. In Hegel's view, the search for personal and social identities, a fundamental intention of modern individuals deserves to be *respected and justified*, in spite of all its difficulties and contradictions. It is from this aspect that he places the division of the individual, and one's claim to identification with oneself and the world in the center of the topic of modern conduct. He also has

⁵³ Cf. R, 201–202 (§ 162).

⁵⁴ For the comprehensive right of subjective will, see R, 158–161 (§ 132).

⁵⁵ R, 200 (§ 159).

⁵⁶ R, 213 (§ 176).

practical suggestions in regard of appropriate conduct, as we have seen in the analysis of man's behavior.

We cannot deny that many of Hegel's considerations on the identity and integrity of the modern personality are no longer valid. Reconciliation as a universal model for conduct is hardly tenable in the face of some developments in late modernity. Hegel's theoretical effort and honesty is still worthy of praise. His sharp and realistic thinking left us with a number of inspiring considerations on the situation of the modern individual. The Hegelian discussion of the inner tensions of private life, the collisions between privacy and profession, private person and substantial person, gender and social roles still offers points of orientation in questions concerning the identity and integrity of our personality. The individuals' right to particularity and the rights of such communities as marriage, family or partnership generate even more conflicts than in Hegel's time. In one way or another, we all have to face such conflicts. Hegel proves to be a remarkable partner to argue with in such matters.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SELF-DETERMINATION/SELF-DISPOSAL OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE WORLD OF POLITICS AND RIGHT. THE HEGELIAN CONCEPTION OF THE MODERN CULTURE OF FREEDOM

The commandment of right is [...]: *be a person and respect others as persons*.¹

It is part of education, of *thinking* as consciousness of the individual in the form of universality, that I am apprehended as a *universal* person, in which [respect] *all* are identical. *A human being counts as such because he is a human being*, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc. This consciousness [...] is of infinite importance.²

The state is not a work of art; it exists in the world, and hence in the sphere of arbitrariness, contingency, and error, and bad behaviour may disfigure it in many respects. But the ugliest man, the criminal, the invalid, or the cripple is still a living human being; the affirmative aspect – life – survives in spite of such deficiencies, and it is with this affirmative aspect that we are here concerned.³

1. THE LIBERALISM OF HEGEL?

The above quotations, and, most of all, our recent reconstruction of the Hegelian conception of modern individuality seem to confirm that it is not totally groundless to speak of Hegel's liberalism. The almost two hundred years of debate on Hegel's political liberalism, conservatism or statism was further emphasized in the 1970's. Among others, Kaufmann (1970), Avineri (1972), and Taylor (1975) refuted the widespread, ideological and false picture of Hegel fashioned partly by liberals like Popper after the

¹ R, 69 (§ 36).

² R, 240 (§ 209).

³ R, 279 (§ 258).

Second World War.⁴ This rehabilitation concerned mostly the *Philosophy of Right*, which is also the main text of the following examination. I want to begin with saying that I agree with Taylor's comment that it is a laughable attempt to classify Hegel in terms of liberalism and conservatism.⁵ In addition, the considerations of the neo-pragmatic Hegel discussion seem to be apt for further elucidating Hegel's position and introducing new aspects. Moyar's suggestion to treat Hegel's views on the relations of individuals and institutions as a complementary model looks promising in regard of my present discussion as well.⁶

As can be suspected from the above, I do not wish to say that in a political sense, Hegel was a clear-cut liberal, although the influence of the classical liberal tradition on the basic thoughts of his practical philosophy is undeniable. One evidence of this influence is his focus on the modern principle of subjective freedom. His statement that the right of personality and every right embodies the concept of freedom, the highest determination of spirit, in relation to which everything else is without substance expresses clearly this connection.⁷ The subjective freedom of modern individuals as the universal essence of spirit and the specific essence of history is one of the basic tenets of Hegel's practical philosophy. His political philosophy is certainly much more complex: it contains many elements of political conservatism as well. These elements, however, are parts of a political conservatism deeply rooted in Hegel's theory of modernity and its key element, the principle of infinite free subjectivity.⁸ Anyway,

⁴ *Hegel's Political Philosophy*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Atherton, 1970), Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), Karl Popper, *Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde. Vol. 2: Falsche Propheten. Hegel, Marx und die Folgen.* 4. ed. (München: UTB Francke, 1975).

⁵ Taylor says: "Hegel's political theory is quite without precedent or parallel. The attempt to classify it by picking out liberal or conservative shibboleths can just lead to laughable misinterpretations." Taylor, *Hegel*, 374–375.

⁶ Moyar on practical authority: "According to the broadly understood pragmatic reading developed by Terry Pinkard and Robert Brandom, authority has a social and historical context, in which causes (grounds) become authoritative for us who live and argue in communities." Moyar, "Die Verwirklichung meiner Autorität," 210.

⁷ R, 59 (§ 30).

⁸ It has been a main proposition of Hegel interpretation from the first half of the nineteenth century, which also became inveterate in dogmatic Marxism that Hegel was an ideologue of Prussian monarchy, a philosophical accomplice of political reaction. Some traces of this picture of Hegel appear even in Rosenzweig's otherwise valuable work, who speaks of the "dependence" of the "Berlin professor" on "reactionary Prussia." Cf. Franz Rosenzweig, *Hegel und der Staat* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2010), 432. – The publication of the lectures on the philosophy of right by Ilting in the early nineteen-seventies did

I do not discuss here Hegel's political liberalism or conservatism: I only examine some Hegelian considerations emerging from the reconstruction of the Hegelian conception of modern individuality, in connection with the liberal tradition of modern philosophy. I do this partly in the structural and conceptional framework of his philosophy; partly by calling to mind some phenomena discovered and sharply analyzed by Hegel, which are still relevant today. Hegel shed light on a number of problems that are still to be solved by today's modern societies. One of these is the notion of negative freedom and its critique: in his description, Hegel uses the metaphor "fury of destruction." He also makes a diagnosis of the phenomena and the interconnections of *modern religious fanaticism* and *political terror*, the timeliness of which hardly needs to be verified. Further considerations relevant to our recent problems are the protection of bodily integrity, everyone's bodily *intangibility* ("Unantastbarkeit"); the emphasis on the "*higher right*" of every human being's *personal existence* incorporating natural existence; and the discussion of the institutional guarantees and *subjective-habitual components* of human and personal rights. This liberal range of ideas include the establishment of *legal consciousness as legal culture*, which Hegel demanded for every individual and considered as a balancing moment in modern society and state.⁹ The discussion of the beginnings of *modern welfare state* also belong here.¹⁰

These phenomena affect the individuals of modern society in their personal existence, which Hegel pointed out partly in a systematic conceptual framework, partly on the examples of idealtypical phenomena.¹¹ The Hegelian interpretation of the political-legal aspects of modern freedom

much to correct this hardly authentic picture. We have to add, however, that Ilting tried to strengthen the image of a reformer, even revolutionary Hegel, which led to philological problems, and was not entirely justifiable. In other words, authenticity suffered once again.

⁹ For the higher right of personal existence, cf. R, 154–155 (§ 127). – For the legal culture of every individual cf. the chapter on the administration of justice in the *Philosophy of Right*. The knowledge mentioned here is available for "every educated person." R, 256 (§ 227). – For the question of legal culture see sub-chapter 2.3. of the present chapter.

¹⁰ Let us remember that the idea of pluralism, linked with the freedom of the modern individual as a basic value is fundamental to Hegel's political philosophy. On the relevance of this for today's political philosophy, see Andrew Buchwalter, "Political Pluralism in Hegel and Rawls," in *Pluralism and the Pragmatic Turn: The Transformation of Critical Theory*, ed. William Rehg and James Bohman (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2011), 339–359.

¹¹ Merker remarks that Hegel subsumes under the same concept complex entities which have various external relationships and are internally articulated. This methodological procedure makes Hegel's conceptual set capable of phenomenological description as well. Cf. Merker, "Jenseits des Hirns," 146–7.

is to be found in the twofold medium of institutional structures *and* subjective lifeworlds and conditions of modern individuals. Hegel treats freedom as the central problem of practical philosophy in the field of tension between these complementary structures (Moyar) of objective and subjective freedom, the objective order of the institutions, and the subjective freedom of individuals, this two-fold basic structure of modern society.¹² He described the freedom structures of modern society with terms like *self-determination, separation, particularity* subsumed under the comprehensive category of the will. This conceptuality and the structural articulation of freedom make it clear that Hegel does not simply assume the horizon of liberal discussion but broadens and reinterprets it in modern philosophy. He does not treat the problem of subjective freedom solely in the formations of abstract law given through the governing concept of the will and its divisions, or in the perspective of the administration of justice in civil society, or from the viewpoint of the modern state and politics, following the linear architecture of the system of objective spirit. The question of subjective freedom is interwoven in all of the mentioned parts of practical philosophy, while its topical and architectonic center and its text corpus can be found at the intersection of these parts. *This position in the dynamic-circular dimensions of the system lends a unique character to the Hegelian theory of modern freedom (and modern individuality).*

A correct reconstruction requires that we recognize Hegel's *special, liberal conservative position, that has no antecedents or followers*, as Taylor himself emphasizes. This special position has its origins in the *dual* basic structure of spirit, in the fundamental *complementary* relation of substantiality *and* subjectivity. We also have to recognize and follow Hegel's intentions in virtue of a phenomenological-conceptual approach, beside the conceptual-systematic one.

¹² Stekeler-Weithofer emphasizes the significance of pragmatic-practical life-relations for philosophy, without losing sight of the embeddedness of these life-relations in institutional structures. One of the most profound problems of modern theory of culture, epistemology, and dogmatic naturalism is their underestimation of the institutional framework of culture (all cultures). See Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer, *Philosophie des Selbstbewusstseins: Hegels System als Formanalyse von Wissen und Autonomie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2005), 40. – He also adds that only objective criteria can create an order where common action and human freedom are possible and secured. Ethical reason in this sense can only be real in the institutional framework of judgment, foundation, and consistent action. Ibid., 338–339.

2. SUBJECTIVE FREEDOM AS THE PRINCIPLE OF POLITICAL LIBERALISM – IN THE CONTEXTS OF LAW, MORALITY AND ETHICAL LIFE

Charles Taylor linked Hegel's political views with systematic considerations. He acted in Hegel's spirit when he treated the phenomena of modern politics and the questions of modern political philosophy in the conceptional, systematic and categorical connections of Hegelian philosophy as a whole. However, his suggestion that we should rely on reason as cosmic order and as human reason, for these two constitute the appropriate systematic theses in Hegel, seems insufficient.¹³ These abstract-reductionist theses – which are hardly reconcilable with Hegel's complex conception – cannot explain such phenomena as modern religious fanaticism and political terror, bodily integrity and its protection, human and personal rights, or the legal consciousness of individuals.¹⁴ In my analysis, I shall follow the method of Hegelian systematic conceptuality, by which I refer to the concepts of the Hegelian theory of practical individuality specified and unfolded in the course of explication, and their constellations. Reason as cosmic order does not necessarily belong here. What does belong here, though, is the practical connotation of reason, which plays a central role in the *Philosophy of Right*.¹⁵ An important element in methodological complexity as an adequate procedure of reconstruction is Hegel's critique of the methodological atomism of modern philosophy from the viewpoint of the complex and complementary basic structure of modern society based on subjective *and* substantial freedom. Hegel studied closely the questions of human and personal rights and constitutions, as well as German, French, and British political conditions, British economics, which always stands in the background of the whole oeuvre. The two pillars of the complex Hegelian theory of modern society is the commitment to rights and liberties, and the institutional legitimization and assertion of those. The *Philosophy of Right* is the most important document of this conception.

One basic point of orientation is Hegel's commitment to the principle of modernity, which consists in infinitely subjective freedom. In the

¹³ Taylor, *Hegel*, 373–374.

¹⁴ Cf. sub-chapters 2.2. and 2.3. of the present chapter.

¹⁵ In the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, the dual thesis of rational and actual refers not only to ontological and epistemological dimensions and connotations, but has a practical philosophical meaning. – On the ontological and epistemological connotations of reason, cf. Emundts and Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel: Eine Einführung*, 32–37, 66–68.

following, we shall focus on this, mentioning institutional aspects only from this point of view. The high esteem for subjective freedom is a common feature of liberal thinkers, and Hegel agrees with them in this respect. However, his insight into the collisions occurring in the realization process of the principle of subjective freedom, its problematic relations with actuality, and his acute diagnosis which is still surprisingly relevant today show that his liberalism is a *peculiar* one. One evidence of its peculiarity lays in the Hegelian theory of modern individuality, the reconstruction of which is a task partly behind, partly ahead of us.

Within objective spirit, *law* is the *first context*: here we can conceive of the *realization* of the principle of subjective freedom as the first socio-cultural contextualization of spirit. Law in its abstractness is infinitely important: abstract Self as universal person is what is identical in everyone – as we read in the third motto. This is the basic principle and component of every human and personal right, overriding all rights of individual, ethnic, religious, cultural, etc. particularity. This idea and universal norm is expressed by philosophical law, while positive law – the actual legal order of modern societies – supplements and concretizes it. The sphere of law is a union of the idea, universal *normativity*, and *relations to actuality*. This becomes explicit first in the relation between philosophical law and positive law, then in the concrete legal system and administration of justice. Hegel emphasizes this duality from the very start: “*right is any existence in general which is the existence of the free will, and in general freedom as Idea.*”¹⁶ Nevertheless, law is a determination of freedom in both of its relations. That is why it is something utterly sacred.¹⁷ Law, existing legal order included, is not a manifestation of individual arbitrary will, as Rousseau supposes,¹⁸ but “*substantial ground.*” In other words, law is a constellation of *value-principled institutions and subject-shapes*.

A further feature of legal normativity is that every stage of objective spirit has its distinctive right, because it is the existence of freedom in one of its own determinations.¹⁹ Morality, ethical life, the interest of the state – all these are specific rights, because *each of them is the determination and existence of freedom.*²⁰ In actuality, these specific rights may *come into collision*. The limitation of these collisions takes place through

¹⁶ R, 58 (§ 29).

¹⁷ R, 59 (§ 30).

¹⁸ R, 58 (§ 29).

¹⁹ R, 59 (§ 30).

²⁰ R, 59 (§ 30).

the *equilibrium model* of modern society.²¹ *The normativity and sanctity of law, as well as its actual collisions all have their origins in freedom.* Their management takes place in the medium of the administration of justice, the institutions of the state and the legal consciousness of the individuals, and the relational forms of the former, in accordance with the equilibrium model.

Subjective will contextualized in law is not yet the real self-determined will of individuality. The Self of subjective will become subjective individuality in the context of morality, which follows now.²² Hegel expresses this further contextualization in morality by the basic concepts of self-determination/self-disposal and self-reflection.²³ *Self-reflection* as the conceptual web of epistemic forms (insight, disposition, conscience) *and self-determination* as the conceptual web used to describe the individual's orientation towards oneself and the external world constitute *together* the *conceptual constellation of the moral subjectivity of subjective freedom*. This brings forth the *dimensions of actuality* of individual existence, which Hegel indicates conceptually using the terms particular existence of the person, and actuality of the individual. He describes the different contexts of law and morality as follows:

The moral way of action does not concern the human being as abstract person, but according to the general and necessary conditions of his particular existence. Therefore it is not merely restrictive, like the legal command (Rechtsangebot) which only requires that we leave the others' freedom untouched, but commands that we provide something positive to the other. The prescriptions of morality address individual actuality.²⁴

In contrast to the negative-restrictive character of legal contextualization, personal freedom gains positive meanings in the context of morality. Here, the shape of the free individual's actuality consists in the fact that the individual contains in one's personal existence both one's immediate natural state or naturalness, and one's inner world and the reflection of these. The center of morality is the free person, a union of one's epistemic self-reflections/forms of consciousness (insight, disposition, conscience),

²¹ R, 59 (§ 30).

²² R, 62 (§ 33).

²³ The inspiration offered by these Hegelian concepts in contemporary discussions is shown clearly by Brandom's frequently cited paper, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution*.

²⁴ Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Rechts-, Pflichten- und Religionslehre für die Unterklasse (1810)," in *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften, 1808–1817*, 253 (§ 35).

the rights of one's normative self-determination, and forms of one's life (particular existence, individual actuality, inner world). In this constellation, Hegel draws the problem of freedom into the modern debate of liberalism as a complex of forms of consciousness and forms of life linked with norms (individual's rights and value-contents).²⁵ This conceptual constellation reveals a basic feature of Hegelian liberalism: its *value-oriented communitarian commitment*. Hegel thus elaborates a *model of theoretical conservatism* that incorporates the modern principle of free subjectivity as a complementary element, in accordance with *liberal thought*. In this interpretative framework, particularity is of utmost importance: on the one hand, it is a right to particularity (Recht an Besonderheit), the normativity of the practical standpoint and attitude aimed at realizing freedom; on the other hand, it is a practical ability, with those *concrete practices* that may be attached to it, realizing the right to particularity. What we face here is a combination of the normative-theoretical grounding and justification of subjective freedom, its concrete-particular actualization, and epistemic and practical forms belonging to both of the former.

We find the system of concrete freedom in dual structures composed of micro- and macrostructures of a plurality of specific lifeworlds differentiated from individuals' particular existence and of the objective order of institutions and norms.²⁶ The objective order of the institutions is the *third contextualization* of the person's freedom, following law and morality: it takes place in *ethical life*. The context of the objective order of

²⁵ In this complex interpretive framework, the links between Hegel's practical philosophy and the problems and alternative solutions of German idealism become visible. In the background of the universal-subjective components of modern society (subjective freedom as idea, concept, principle, and right) we can identify the Fichtean Self as consciousness and self-consciousness, combined with Hegel's social project of the "actualization" of freedom. In addition, the institutional dimension of modern society is also an important part of Hegel's social project: in consequence, we can conceive of the legal system of a given state as the "realm of actualized freedom." The forms and aspects of subjective freedom, e.g. the system of law and the administration of justice (to which we nowadays refer to as the questions of modern individuals' social integrity and identity) are integrated into this social-institutional structure. – The social and personal self-identity of the Self has been a crucial issue for the young Hegel as well, which is shown by his critique of obsolete institutions. It was of central importance for him "that people could live in concord with themselves and others, meaning that they could live in harmony with their own needs, affections, and considered opinions, without being alienated from others." Cf. Emundts and Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel*, 21–22.

²⁶ For the Hegelian term of "objective order" see R, 237–238 (§ 206).

ethical life is not a final end or an end in itself.²⁷ Hegel highlights here how modern institutions – the legal order, the administration of justice – can contribute to the consolidation and stabilization of the deportment, life conduct, and lifeworld of self-determined and therefore unstable modern individuals. To strengthen the integrity and identity of modern individual, whose consciousness and self-consciousness, practical attitude and lifeworld are all unstable is one of the fundamental intentions of Hegel's practical philosophy. This basic motive – interfering in people's lives – is another important contribution to the modern debate of liberalism. The institutions of the modern state (based on the rule of law) do not have their purpose in themselves, nor do they manifest the excessive power of the state: they are – as Hegel puts it – means to serve the *balanced operation* of the practical attitudes and lifeworlds of the individuals. The *Philosophy of Right* is not just a theory of modern institutions, legal formations and arrangements, but also a theory of the socio-culturally linked self-determinations of the modern individual, which are at the same time interwoven with the elements of every single individual's freedom. This theory is connected to the *equilibrium model*. As Hegel remarks, the modern state must on the whole assert the formal right of self-consciousness to its own insight and conviction against institutions based on authority.²⁸

Modern society can only function when the institutional components of the state as the rule of law (division of power and constitution as the objective guarantees of freedom; the appropriate institutional forms and frameworks of law and politics; the appropriate forms and procedures of the administration of justice and public affairs) *and* the individuals' own worlds based on self-determination function in a balanced way. Thus, the tension between the opposing forces, the devastating effect of the increasing division between poverty and wealth, luxury consumption and mass pauperization²⁹ or political conflicts can be reduced. The *Hegelian project of modern freedom*³⁰ aims at preventing modern society – which shows an

²⁷ Reflecting on the neo-pragmatic discussion, Stekeler-Weithofer emphasized the importance of institutions for modern subjective freedom. Stekeler-Weithofer, *Philosophie des Selbstbewusstseins*, 338–9.

²⁸ R, 301 (§ 270).

²⁹ Cf. chapter B.I.3.

³⁰ The present reconstruction of the Hegelian project of modern freedom is connected to Jürgen Habermas's views. Contentual connection consists in the emphasis on modernity as an "unfulfilled project" (unvollendetes Projekt) and on the "profanation of Western culture"; it does not follow Lyotard in his reinterpretation also stressed by Habermas. It is rather committed to Max Weber, and his description of "disenchantment" (Entzauberung), the rise of a profane culture in Europe. This profanation affects freedom and reason, the

inclination to extremes for structural reasons – and individual lifeworlds at its center from falling apart. However, in order to achieve this goal, *individuals do not only have to have rights, but also appropriate forms of consciousness, self-consciousness, and attitudes*, which are the forms and frameworks of the realization of these rights, and through the mediation of which individuals *themselves* can contribute to the consolidation of society and their own lifeworlds in it. This explains the emphatic role of the Hegelian notion of education and training for freedom.³¹ One basic form of this is the elaboration of legal consciousness as legal culture.

Hegel follows the classical tradition of political philosophy regarding the legal forms, frameworks, and institutional guarantees of freedom. Human rights and personal rights are important elements in the Hegelian notion of *Rechtsstaat* as well. He treats these forms of freedom and their guarantees in the framework of the traditional concept of free will, although not in a traditional manner. On the one hand, he emphasizes the infinite importance of these forms of freedom, while on the other, he assigns a limited validity to these rights, since they are abstract, formal and therefore deficient. The systematic conceptual structure mentioned above in several connections, and the conception underlying it explains why Hegel is adherent to the liberal legacy of Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Kant, at the same time sharply criticizing it.

Hegel calls the universal forms and formations of individual freedom, human and personal rights – or more specifically, the right of equality – infinitely important. At the same time, he needs *contentual* determination – substantive normativity – for this formal-legal normativity. In this regard, the introduction of the *right to particularity* is illuminating: this right makes it possible to attain the *positive* which is not contained in law itself, as we could read in our second motto. *Contentual determination as the particular existence of the individual* is a key moment in the Hegelian conception of modern freedom. The right to particularity is the supreme right in this relation. Hegel points this out in comparison with the right of equality. Equality and becoming particular are both a person's right. However, the latter is superior, since particularization actualizes

basic values of European culture as well. See Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 7–9.

³¹ Training and education for freedom is summed up by Hegel in the manuscript note to § 57 of the *Philosophy of Right*: “Mensch ist selbst frei, überhaupt im Besitze seiner selbst, nur durch Bildung.” Human being is free, or is in possession of his self, only through education. Formation for freedom (“Formierung zur Freiheit selbst”) is the “realization” of this. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, 125.

the contentual determination of individual life, of which rights – including the right of equality – take no notice. Particularity is therefore a key concept in elucidating and realizing the Hegelian claim to the contentual determination of liberties. The inclusion of *contentual determinations into this* debate in liberalism highlights Hegel's very specific position, when compared with traditional liberalism.

The Hegelian idea quoted in the second motto is interesting in this context as well. Subjective freedom of the abstract person (the subject of abstract law in the linear structure of the *Philosophy of Right*) cannot remain merely prohibitive as the legal order that only commands to leave others' freedom intact. Acting morally means that we have to do something positive to others. What does this mean actually? It means that we give others something *contentually concrete* in the above sense. It becomes clear that Hegel reinterprets Kantian morality, which is interesting for the problem of liberalism as well. In this interpretation, lifeworld as the individual's own, particular actuality taking shape in the various acts of self-determination can be understood as a new sphere of freedom, which sphere supplements, broadens and rearranges the Kantian normativity of individual freedom, in which autonomy rules over heteronomy. This is where *Hegel draws welfare linked with heteronomy in subjective freedom*.³² This conceptional change – the transition from the idea of the good to welfare as the individual's right and its particular actuality – reveals once again the Hegelian emphasis on the dimension of actuality.³³

The reinterpretation and enlargement of subjective freedom through the involvement of dimensions of actuality originates in the fact that for Hegel – unlike Kant – the subject of freedom is “*actual human being*.” The difference between the subject of classical liberalism, Kant's moral subject and actual human being, the subject of Hegelian practical philosophy is obvious. Of course, the person is an important form of subjectivity for freedom in Hegel's work, in more than one respect: as legal person in abstract law, personal existence and welfare in morality, which is the reality of the person in civil society: the concrete person being motivated by needs. The morally autonomous subject of Kant is also important for Hegelian moral individuality. At the same time, however, Hegel points out the limitations of the abstract person of law and morally acting personality/individuality,

³² Let us remember that welfare, law and the good have an outstanding significance for the particular lifeworlds of the individuals in their mutual reference. Cf. R, 157–158 (§ 130) and chapter B.I.3.

³³ Cf. chapter B.I.3.2.

saying that “the law does not act; only an actual human being acts.”³⁴ The Hegelian subject of modern freedom is *actual human being* in its *real complexity*, with its universal-normative rights, own concrete-particular self-interpretation, the corresponding reflective forms (insight, conscience) and interpretation of the world, its own particular lifeworld, its relations to others (intersubject as family-member, as the second, cooperative shape of civil society, the subject-shape attending to public affairs in politics), and with its embeddedness in the social and institutional world. Let us recall Pinkard’s critique, who speaks of the enlargement of the subject in so far as it incorporates objectivity.³⁵ I think that Hegel wants something else: his intention is to work out *a method of interpretation which is adequate to the complexity of the spheres of modern life and actuality*, and to expand it to the subject-shapes of subjective freedom, their rights and worlds. Exactly because the *controversial, expansive nature of subjective freedom* in modernity is directed primarily to the subject of this freedom itself, making him/her stronger but at the same time more insecure.

Hegel, like Kant, knew that the expansion of freedom in modernity results in the *expansion of heteronomy* as well, which Hegel calls particularity and mediocrity. In the shape of the right and actuality of welfare, this becomes an everyday experience. Hegel’s reaction, however, is different from Kant’s. What he emphasizes is that neither practices, lifeworlds, human relations, nor art can evade the influence of extending particularity and mediocrity, and its basis in lifeworld, i.e. the controversial system of welfare. Still, in spite of all its negative effects, freedom is an achievement of modernity, which in turn has its price.

Hegel demonstrates the controversial consequences and effects of modern freedom on individuals by some idealtypical phenomena. These can illustrate the previously mentioned internal relation between Hegelian conceptuality and phenomenological approach, and show once again the relevance of this phenomenological-conceptual approach.³⁶

³⁴ R, 178 (§ 140).

³⁵ Pinkard, “Innen, Außen und Lebensformen: Hegel und Wittgenstein,” 256.

³⁶ Cf. chapter A.I.1.

3. SOME IDEALTYPICAL PHENOMENA OF MODERN FREEDOM – IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CULTURE OF FREEDOM

3.1. *“The Fury of Destruction”: Modern Religious Fanaticism and Political Terror*

Section 5 of the *Philosophy of Right* starts with a critique of the concepts of freedom offered by Rousseau and Kant. Hegel's polemics is expressed in the metaphor “the fury of destruction.” He describes the criticized standpoint as a “flight from every content” (“Flucht aus dem Inhalt”), which results in an opposition between freedom and actuality. This negative freedom, the freedom of the void was manifested drastically in the fanaticism of the French Revolution, both in religion and in politics. This freedom was “raised to the status of passion.” When it has a religious shape, it can remain “purely theoretical.” But “if it turns to actuality, it becomes in the realm of both politics and religion the fanaticism of destruction, demolishing the whole existing social order, eliminating all individuals regarded as suspect by a given order, and annihilating any organization which attempts to rise up anew. Only in destroying something does this negative will have a feeling of its own existence.”³⁷ This negative freedom “eliminates” all individuals, since it gains its self-consciousness from the annihilation of particularity and the demolition of objective order.³⁸ These destructive phenomena have their origins in those new political constellations which first appeared in the Jacobin dictatorship, the archetype of modern political extremism. Hegel calls attention to the theoretical error of Rousseau (whom he otherwise holds in high esteem): Rousseau, like Fichte later, “considered the will only in the determinate form of the individual will,” and general will only as common will. Being stuck in intellectual thinking, he could not reach the stage of rationality and substantiality. And “when these abstractions were invested with power,” they did not just destroy authorities – which Hegel approves in principle – but “they afforded the tremendous spectacle, for the first time we know of in human history of the overthrow of all existing and given conditions [...] they turned the attempt into the most terrible and drastic event.”³⁹

Nevertheless, this negative behavior can remain an inner phenomenon, e.g., in “religious disposition.” It is not necessary that this disposition

³⁷ R, 38 (§ 5).

³⁸ R, 38 (§ 5).

³⁹ R, 277 (§ 258).

should be actualized, it can remain internal, adapt itself to laws, “and simply resign itself to these with sighs, or with contempt and longing. It is not strength but weakness which, in our times, has turned religiosity into a polemical kind of piety.”⁴⁰ “If, however, this negative attitude does not simply remain an inward disposition and viewpoint, but turns instead to the actual world and asserts itself within it, it leads to religious fanaticism which, like political fanaticism, repudiates all political institutions and legal order.”⁴¹

It is remarkable how Hegel explains this complex of phenomena. In § 5 of the *Philosophy of Right*, he speaks of the void of negative freedom, contrasting it with subjective freedom as the particularization of the Self, which lends it – to Self, i.e., to every individual – a proper, particular content. Contentful, particular, positive freedom as opposed to formal, abstract and void, negative freedom has its origin in self-determination as the higher norm, which is in turn a subjective value. Life becomes concrete and contentful as *this* personal existence, exactly through the self-determined particularization of individuals: it is in concrete actions grounded in self-determination that we can experience norms and transfer them to various spheres of our actuality. We do not face here the purely logical construction of individual, particular, and universal: this logical-conceptual constellation is *contextualized* in the sphere of spirit by Hegel. At the same time, he relates it to the simple life of every human being.⁴² It is precisely this simple life that the destructive fury of religious fanaticism and political terror threatens to eliminate from time to time. This notwithstanding, the simple life has a right to exist, which Hegel emphasizes in the lectures on the philosophy of world history.⁴³ This life as the particular existence of subjective, personal freedom has the supreme right

⁴⁰ R, 294 (§ 270).

⁴¹ R, 293 (§ 270).

⁴² The Hegelian term of “simple life” expresses the unreflected dimension of the individual’s lifeworld, the operation of instinctive reason. Key passages on this aspect of life are the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, the Preface to the second edition of the *Encyclopedia*, and the Berlin *Antrittsrede*.

⁴³ “The religion, the morality of a limited sphere of life – that of a shepherd or a peasant, e.g., – in its intensive concentration and limitation to a few perfectly simple relations of life – has infinite worth; the same worth as the religion and morality of extensive knowledge, and of an existence rich in the compass of its relations and actions. This inner focus – this simple region of the claims of subjective freedom – the home of volition, resolution, and action – the abstract sphere of conscience – that which comprises the responsibility and moral value of the individual, remains untouched; and is quite shut out from the noisy din of the World’s History [...]” WH, 52.

not just to self-defence, but to protection via the institutions of the modern state.

Let us add that Hegel has never disputed the historical importance of the French Enlightenment or the Revolution, and their contribution to the formation of modern world. In his lectures on the history of philosophy, he expresses his appreciation for their unique achievements, with an element of national self-critique to it, saying that what the French brought forward as a remedy for the “horrible state of disorder” was

that men should no longer be in the position of laymen, either with regard to religion or to law; so that in religious matters there should not be a hierarchy, a limited and selected number of priests, and in the same way that there should not be in legal matters an exclusive caste and society (not even a class of professional lawyers) [...] but that human reason should have the right of giving its assent and its opinion. To treat barbarians as laymen is quite as it should be – barbarians are nothing but laymen; but to treat thinking men as laymen is very hard. This great claim made by man to subjective freedom, perception and conviction, the philosophers in question contended for heroically and with splendid genius, with warmth and fire, with spirit and courage, maintaining that a man's own self, the human spirit, is the source from which is derived all that is to be respected by him. There thus manifests itself in them the fanaticism of abstract thought. We Germans were passive at first with regard to the existing state of affairs, we endured it; in the second place, when that state of affairs was overthrown, we were just as passive: it was overthrown by the efforts of others, we let it be taken away from us, we suffered it all to happen.⁴⁴

Jacobin dictatorship as the archetype of the extremes of modern political freedom serves as an eternal memento for European nations.

3.2. *Bodily Integrity as an Element of Personal Identity*

Human and personal rights, like freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the freedom of intellectual property, the right of disposal over one's own physical and intellectual capacities are important components of the Hegelian conception of philosophical law. Many aspects, forms and occurrences of the right to self-determination – discussed by Hegel in a various relations of morality and ethical life – also belong here. From this range of topics and concepts let us now focus on the bodily *integrity of the person*,

⁴⁴ Lectures on the History of Philosophy (Part III, Section Two, Chapter II.C.1.).

which Hegel links with the topic of *personal identity*, in an approach that can still be inspiring for today's disputes.

The first, immediate, natural identity of the Self is the bodily or physical integrity of the singular, actualized in the external, the organic, the body (Körper). At the same time, bodily integrity is the first act and element of subjective freedom:

as a person, I am myself an *immediate individual*; in its further determination, this means in the first place that I am *alive* in this *organic body*, which is my undivided external existence, *universal* in content, the real potentiality of all further-determined existence. But as a person, I at the same time possess *my life and body* like other things only *in so far as I so will it*.⁴⁵

Hegel continues this line of thought in the Remarks:

The fact that, from the point of view that I exist not as the concept which has being for itself but as the immediate concept, that I am *alive* and have an organic body, depends on the concept of life and on the concept of the spirit as soul -moments which are taken over from the philosophy of nature (...) I have these limbs and my life only *in so far as I so will it*; the animal cannot mutilate or destroy itself, but the human being can.⁴⁶

Transforming determinations of natural philosophy and integrating them in the spirit, Hegel understands bodily integrity as an act and formation of the individuals' subjective freedom. The foundation of this transformation is in the will as *my will*, the comprehensive concept of spirit, and its special, subjective shape. (This shows that not only logical-conceptual shapes, but also conceptual shapes of natural philosophy get transformed in the course of contextualization in the spirit.) This integrity is first concrete-physical and organic-physical, which – in contrast to animals – human individuals have at their *free disposal*, up to the point that they can mutilate or even kill themselves. (A consideration that might be interesting for today's bio-ethical discussions.) Self-disposal in regard of bodily or physical integrity is an inalienable right of every human being (Self) in the context of spirit. In relation to other human individuals, this means the *intangibility of my*

⁴⁵ R, 78 (§ 47).

⁴⁶ R, 78 (§ 47). In the German original, Hegel gives exact references: "Daß ich nach der Seite, nach welcher Ich nicht als der für sich seiende, sondern als der unmittelbare Begriff existiere, *lebendig* bin und einen organischen Körper habe, beruht auf dem Begriffe des Lebens und dem des Geistes als Seele – auf Momenten, die aus der Naturphilosophie (*Enzyklop. der philos. Wissensch.*, § 259 ff, vgl. § 161, 164 und 298) und der Anthropologie (ebd. § 318) aufgenommen sind. Ich habe diese Glieder, das Leben nur, *insofern ich will*: das Tier kann sich nicht selbst verstümmeln oder umbringen, aber der Mensch."

own bodily integrity, which is also a basic norm, albeit with a negative connotation: a legal command. Hegel highlights the positive side of the relation to others as well: my free existence for the other human being. As he remarks: “*for others* I am in my body. I am *free for the other* only in so far as I am free in my *existence*: this is an identical position.”⁴⁷ As we can see, my freedom related to another human being has two aspects: one is negative freedom, my bodily integrity and its intangibility. It also means that giving it up or handing it over to another human being is only possible by *my own free decision*. At the same time, there is another, latent positive moment: I am *for* others, which means a sort of openness and has the promise of self-revelation. Nevertheless, Hegel indisputably focuses on the aspect of negative freedom when speaking of integrity: the intangibility of my bodily integrity. He treats this as a *personal liberty*, and not just in a formal legal sense, since this intangibility touches my very *existence*. As he puts it: “Violence done to my body by others is violence done to me.”⁴⁸

Intangibility (Unantastbarkeit) is thus a form of negative freedom. Hegel investigates the problem of the alienation of the body (a restriction of freedom) in the context of bodily integrity. His examples are slavery, serfdom, and the inability to possess property.⁴⁹ The latter raises serious questions about the structural problems of modern economy. The inability to possess property may demand that people alienate their physical and intellectual skills for a limited period of time.⁵⁰ This is intended to explain how physical and intellectual skills become the workforce and have market value, without denying the principle of subjective freedom and its value from the viewpoint of the individuals in modern society. He emphasizes that personality as a totality is inalienable.⁵¹ This statement

⁴⁷ R, 79 (§ 48).

⁴⁸ R, 79 (§ 48).

⁴⁹ Hegel says: “Those goods, or rather substantial determinations, which constitute my own distinct personality and the universal essence of my self-consciousness are therefore *inalienable*, and my right to them is *imprescriptible*. They include my personality in general, my universal freedom of will, ethical life and religion.” R, 95 (§ 66).

⁵⁰ “Because I feel, contact with or violence to my body touches me immediately as *actual and present*. This constitutes the difference between personal injury and infringement of my external property; for in the latter, my will does not have this immediate presence and actuality.” R, 79 (§ 48).

⁵¹ As for the right and protection of life: “The *comprehensive* totality of external activity, i.e. life, is not something external to personality, which is itself *this* personality and *immediate*. The disposal or sacrifice of life is, on the contrary, the opposite of the existence of *this* personality. I have therefore no *right* whatsoever to dispose of my life, and only an ethical Idea as something in which *this immediately* individual personality in itself has

lays down the fundamental right of the person's integrity and identity. It becomes clear at this point that Hegel tackles the problem relying on his own conception of freedom and his extended and reinterpreted idea of liberalism, which is different from either Marx's economic considerations or classical liberal thought. He focuses on the question of personal identity in an empirically universal sense: its emphatically normative inviolability, inalienability, or on the positive side, the right to self-disposal in regard of all physical and intellectual abilities and the totality of the individual are all important elements of his standpoint. The acceptance, reinforcement, and observance of these rights by others – according to preliminary mutuality – are also important elements of this conception. For both my negative and positive freedom is intersubjective: their meaning only becomes explicit in my connection with others.

Hegel presents physical integrity and identity attached to it as key elements of the integrity and identity of the modern person. The requirement of compliance with the norms arising in the relation of negative freedom has not lost its significance: some developments of late modern society and the globalized world have even increased the importance of conforming to this norm.

3.3. *Administration of Justice and Legal Consciousness as Legal Culture*

Right *exists as law* and is applied to particular cases ("the material of civil society")⁵² as the "rule of behavior valid for everyone."⁵³ That is why it is not only a form of universality: legislation and the application of law make it *actual*. On the other hand, right – as early as customary right – is *the object of knowledge*. This knowledge is opposed to positive legal scholarship based on authority.⁵⁴ The principle of authority is opposed by the "right of knowledge."⁵⁵ It is also opposed by the right of self-consciousness, which has its consequences: laws have to be made "universally known," in order that the *principle of freedom* would prevail over the *principle of*

been submerg'd, and which is the *actual* power behind the latter, has such a right. Thus, just as life as such is *immediate*, so also is death at the same time its *immediate* negativity; death must consequently come from outside, either as a natural event, or, in the service of the Idea, by the hand of an outsider." R, 101–102 (§ 70).

⁵² For the application of law to individual cases, see R, 244–246 (§§ 213–214).

⁵³ R, 241 (§ 211).

⁵⁴ R, 244 (§ 212).

⁵⁵ R, 244–245 (§ 213).

authority.⁵⁶ On the basis of this normative-legal requirement, appealing to the right of knowledge and self-consciousness, Hegel sharply contests the “professional,” elitist view of legality: he even goes so far as to call the latter unrightful. As he remarks:

To hang the laws at such a height that no citizen could read them, as Dionysius the Tyrant did, is an injustice of exactly the same kind as to bury them in an extensive apparatus of learned books and collections of verdicts based on divergent judgments, opinions, practices, etc., all expressed in a foreign language, so that knowledge of the laws currently in force is accessible only to those who have made them an object of scholarly study.⁵⁷

The order of administering justice, the principle and practice of the division of power, constitution as the primary objective guarantee of subjective freedom all become parts of Hegel’s theory of the modern state and his account of the legal practice in the modern state. We can thereby speak – with some reservations – of the Hegelian notion of *Rechtsstaat*. This proposition is especially highlighted by the fact that – as someone committed to subjective freedom which involves the freedom of every human being and includes the rights of consciousness and self-consciousness – he raises the issue of *cultivating the legal consciousness and self-consciousness* of individuals as citizens. In his view, the liberties of modernity, our consciousness and practice of them assumes the *legal culture of individuals*. That is why the “public legal code” has to contain only “simple universal determinations.”⁵⁸ On the other hand, it must not be final, as it has to remain adaptable to the “infinite progression” of the “finitude and individuality” of particular lifeworlds and civil society. For “my individual right” has to be recognized in the law of modern (civil) society.⁵⁹ I have to be able to recognize my own peculiar case in the laws.

The knowledge and application of law to particular cases is no doubt the task of the court of law. The administration of justice is the right and duty of public authority.⁶⁰ This task consists in the objective assertion of laws and legality. All this, however does not belong exclusively to the court of law: it is also my business, as a free subject. Those who violate the law, have to *know* it: “the right of subjective knowledge” is one of the

⁵⁶ R, 246 (§ 215).

⁵⁷ R, 246–247 (§ 215).

⁵⁸ R, 247 (§ 216).

⁵⁹ R, 249 (§ 217).

⁶⁰ R, 251–252 (§ 219).

rights of modern individuals.⁶¹ They have to know the law, and have to be able to see its relation to their own case. Their right, and the right of their knowledge involves that the law and the court is destined to *protect them* through punishment and the enforcement of punishment as well: they find their own action in them.⁶²

Knowledge of law derives immediately from the right of self-consciousness as subjective consciousness, the realization of which requires the publicity of the administration of justice.

The rights of the subjective consciousness include not only that of making the laws publicly known (see § 215), but also the possibility of knowing how the law is *actualized* in particular cases, i.e., of knowing the course of the external proceedings, legal arguments, and so forth – the *publicity of the administration of justice*; for the course of law is in itself an occurrence of universal validity, and although the particular content of the case may be of interest only to the parties themselves, its universal content (i.e., the right within it and the decision on this right) is of interest to everyone.⁶³

The right of self-consciousness as a moment of subjective freedom thus requires the publicity of legislation.⁶⁴

Knowledge of right is something to which “every educated person may aspire.”⁶⁵ Knowledge of the individual case is also an important element of legal consciousness, beside the knowledge of laws. A further important element of legal consciousness is knowledge of the insight and subjective intention of the “agent” (Hegel does not talk of perpetrator), which are both components of the classification of the action. Proof always has a subjective moment to it, therefore “absolutely objective” classification is impossible. Hegel even adds that “the ultimate factors in such a decision are subjective conviction and conscience.”⁶⁶ Still, the individual – every individual – has the right look into the process.

At the end of his analysis of the administration of justice, Hegel sharpens his polemic against the elite professionalism of the legal class. The right of self-consciousness as a moment of subjective freedom is not a

⁶¹ It is a right of subjective, active will “to recognize as its *action*, and to accept *responsibility* for, only those aspects of its *deed* which it knew to be presupposed within its end, and which were present in its *purpose*. – I can be made *accountable* for a deed only if *my will was responsible* for it – *the right of knowledge*.” R, 144 (§ 117).

⁶² R, 253 (§ 221).

⁶³ R, 254 (§ 224).

⁶⁴ R, 258 (§ 228).

⁶⁵ R, 256 (§ 227).

⁶⁶ R, 256 (§ 227).

contingent or arbitrary point in this question, but a “substantial aspect” of the publicity of the administration of law. This right of self-consciousness is still not fulfilled, he adds critically. Law has been monopolized by a “class,” a social group, that exercises it as a profession, and keeps it as a secret, hidden from the rest of society. Law is the property of this class

which makes itself exclusive even by the terminology it uses, inasmuch as this terminology is a foreign language for those whose rights are at stake. In this situation, members of civil society, who depend for their livelihood *on their activity, their own knowledge and volition*, remain *alienated* not only from their own most personal interests but also from the substantial and rational basis of these, namely *right*, and they are reduced to a condition of *tutelage*, or even a kind of serfdom, in relation to the class in question. Even if they have the right to be physically present in court, to have a *footing* in it (*in iudicio stare*), this counts for little if they are not to be present *in spirit* and with their own *knowledge*, and the right which they receive will remain an external *fate* for them.⁶⁷

If right remains an external fate for the persons involved, because they cannot take part in it with their knowledge and spirit, only with their physical actuality, it is the greatest injustice. Hegel has harsh words for the exclusivity of the administration of justice which deprives the majority of society of its right of knowledge relevant in this field, and makes it the privilege of a class, the society of jurists. Administration of justice,

whose object is the proper interests of all individuals, was at one time transformed into an instrument of profit and domination, because knowledge of right hid behind scholarship and a foreign language, and knowledge of the legal process hid behind complicated formalities.⁶⁸

He saw it as a serious violation of the principle of modernity, subjective freedom and its realization.

What is needed for the balanced operation of modern society – beside other elements of the administration of justice – is legal knowledge and legal culture. Without them, *law itself becomes lawlessness*. This circumstance is all the more fundamental, as the administration of justice should prevent the infringement of both property and personality.⁶⁹ Modern law more or less ensures that particular welfare is treated as a right, and property is protected. However, the liberties belonging to personal

⁶⁷ R, 258–259 (§ 228).

⁶⁸ R, 335 (§ 297).

⁶⁹ R, 260 (§ 230).

existence, such as the right of self-consciousness, are violated in exactly those spheres that should assert the validity of law. Not necessarily in a legal sense or by legal means, but primarily through professional separation and the consequent alienation of the legal sphere. Alienation of the opportunity to establish legal consciousness as legal culture is an example of negative freedom – in the medium of modern law. *Therefore, in Hegel's eyes, modern administration of justice is the opposite of what is declared in the principles of law: it is a contempt of the basic normative forms of liberties, the right of knowledge and the right of self-consciousness.*

The basis of legal consciousness consists not only in the right of knowledge and self-consciousness, but in the self-consciousness of personality and its right.⁷⁰ This is the source of law's command: be a person and respect others as persons.⁷¹ This command, quoted in the first motto, is violated by the practice of the administration of law, the case and example of negative freedom. A person who stands before the court and is not treated as a person, does not receive due respect: i.e., the command of law is violated or neglected. The person is not viewed as a legal person who has the right to know the law: his or her right to legal knowledge is not respected. Hegel sees the phenomena of negative freedom, which are related to the individuals' legal consciousness, as a neglect of the legal capacities of the modern individual, and the violation of the "right of subjective consciousness" (its element being "subjective certainty") included in the system of law.⁷² Hegel touches on a tender spot of the modern state based on the rule of law.

3.4. *Germs of the Welfare State*

A timely element of the Hegelian conception of the "modern state" is its focus on such occurrences which later – partly because of the escalation of some phenomena which he was already aware of – led to the emergence of the modern welfare state. The importance of Hegel's considerations are not lessened by the fact that recently we witness the crisis and cutback of exactly the welfare functions of the state.

Poverty and impoverishment is a basic problem of modern (consumer and mass) societies, the structural reasons for which can be found in

⁷⁰ R, 67–68 (§ 35).

⁷¹ R, 69 (§ 36).

⁷² On the right of subjective consciousness as an element of modern administration of justice see R, 254 (§ 224); on the right of self-consciousness as a component of the administration of justice see R, 257–258 (§ 228).

modern economy and its corresponding social structures, socio-cultural characteristics, and ways of conduct. Hegel discusses the growing problems of poverty and self-subsistence in general in this complex setting, searching for solutions. According to his diagnosis, the problem starts when for some reason the *resources of the family* are not enough to sustain life. Beside the family, the question of livelihood belongs to the sphere of civil society as well,⁷³ through profession, work, and participation in a corporation. Resources supply livelihoods. More than just the family has resources; Hegel also introduces the concepts of *particular resources* of the corporation, and “universal resources.” The administration of universal resources is the duty of the institutions of public authority, although he does not go into detail about these. He only says that these resources must not be everybody’s prey, and officials of public authority must not be corrupt. He has several suggestions to prevent the latter: e.g., appropriate salary, and high intellectual and ethical standards. Universal resources can only serve private purposes as a last resort, e.g., if the head of the family becomes incapable of work.⁷⁴ Unemployment in general does not belong here: the unemployed person is not entitled to share in universal resources in order to maintain livelihood.

The explanation for this is that Hegel is committed to Adam Smith’s principle of one’s own work: the maintenance and the security of the family should derive from this.⁷⁵ To impose a solidarity tax is therefore unimaginable for Hegel: it would be contrary to the very principle of civil society, the principle of one’s own work, if such a “burden” fell on the “wealthier class” to maintain the “normal standard of living” among an “increasingly impoverished crowd.”⁷⁶

Nevertheless, he induces the “*right of necessity*” which could be a solution to secure livelihood in accordance with the principle of one’s own work. This could come into effect in an early phase of indebtedness or impoverishment, and only if the persons involved possess property. Yet Hegel uses a dramatic voice: the right of necessity is a way out of the “extreme danger” of life, in an “infinite injury to existence.” It is not identical with equity, or injury to the right to property. It is a right linked with the welfare functions of modern society, of which we read in § 127: “From the right of necessity arises the benefit of competence, whereby a debtor

⁷³ R, 80 (§ 49).

⁷⁴ R, 263 (§ 238).

⁷⁵ Cf. R, 266–267 (§ 244).

⁷⁶ R, 267 (§ 245).

is permitted to retain his tools, agricultural implements, clothes, and in general as much of his resources – i.e. of the property of his creditors – as is deemed necessary to support him, even in his accustomed station in society.”⁷⁷

Universal resources can be used for welfare purposes in a very limited sense, e.g., when a special kind of tax (relief tax) is imposed. “Public authority” takes the place of the family under such extreme circumstances as when family bonds dissolve, and/or individuals are deprived of the opportunity of education and training, of the administration of justice, health care, or even the consolation of religion.⁷⁸ However, tutelage in general is not the function of the state, but of civil society, when people “destroy the security of their own and their family’s livelihood by their extravagance,”⁷⁹ or external circumstances lead to their impoverishment.

Resources of the corporation fall under different considerations. If the livelihood of a family is endangered, the burden primarily falls on these resources. Corporation is the strongest ethical bond that provides firm ground and security for its members and their families. It is its duty “to protect its members against certain contingencies.”⁸⁰ Normally, adherence to a corporation means secure resources, a connection between abilities and livelihood, regular income and prosperity: the honor of the individual originates in it.⁸¹ In extraordinary situations, the corporation’s own resources can be necessary. Hegel sums up the characteristics of corporations in respect of managing poverty and wealth saying:

Within the corporation, the help which poverty receives loses its contingent and unjustly humiliating character, and wealth, in fulfilling the duty it owes to its association, loses the ability to provoke arrogance in its possessor and envy in others; rectitude also receives the true recognition and honour which are due to it.⁸²

While Hegel saw some early signs of the welfare state, he cannot be called an ideologue of the welfare state. Primarily because he thought that relieving poverty was the task of *charity*, and not of the state. At the same time he pointed out that this was an unstable, unreliable way of handling poverty. Since charity is mostly subjective and contingent, society is forced

⁷⁷ R, 155 (§ 127).

⁷⁸ R, 265 (§ 241).

⁷⁹ R, 264 (§ 240).

⁸⁰ R, 271 (§ 252).

⁸¹ R, 271 (§ 253).

⁸² R, 272 (§ 253).

to intervene: it “endeavours to make it less necessary by identifying the universal aspects of want and taking steps to remedy them.”⁸³ The social organization of the private forms of charity, highlighted by Hegel, can be seen as an early form of the state’s welfare functions.

Poverty and increasing impoverishment (as well as boundless enrichment) belong to modern civil society for deep structural reasons: “This shows that, despite *an excess of wealth*, civil society is *not wealthy enough* – i.e., its own distinct resources are not sufficient – to prevent an excess of poverty and the formation of a rabble.”⁸⁴ According to Hegel, poverty constitutes a problem when it becomes *large-scale* and leads to a *rabble mentality*. This is less dependent on material conditions than on disposition and ways of life. He investigated this phenomenon using the example of Britain. The “most direct means” can be found in Scotland, where the poor are left to their fate, and directed to beg from the public.⁸⁵ Hegel, however, does not approve this “direct” means. Although the *right to subsistence* is not an *explicitly* formulated right, it is still part of individual rights in Hegel’s conception. The reason is not purely economic, like the reproduction of the workforce. Hegel’s view includes the liberties of all individuals and their contentual determinations. The *right to welfare* includes implicitly the right to satisfy this right at least on a minimum level (the level of self-sustaining).

Hegel’s argument makes it clear why classical liberalism – which deems human rights as the forms of subjective freedom and their legal-institutional guarantees sufficient to secure liberal ideas and values – proves to be unsatisfactory for him. According to him, in modern society professing liberal values, the principle of every individual’s freedom, there have to develop practical attitudes, forms of knowledge and practices which are in accordance with the principle of freedom in all spheres of life and actuality. *The dimension of actuality based on substantial values is a crucial issue for the freedom of culture in modern society.* Establishing and extending education and self-training as part of the culture is an integral element of the former.

Among the forms of subjective liberties, the right to bodily integrity (endangered by modern forms of political terror and religious fanaticism), the individuals’ legal culture as a right to legal knowledge, the right to self-sustaining derived from the right to welfare are of special importance. We

⁸³ R, 265 (§ 242).

⁸⁴ R, 267 (§ 245).

⁸⁵ R, 267 (§ 245).

cannot underestimate Hegel's diagnosis of the rights belonging to the culture of freedom even nowadays. Problems in this regard keep reoccurring in different parts of the world going through democratization. Developing and extending the culture of subjective freedom, the central element of Hegel's conception is also a condition and component of the modern individuals' personal identities. It has its origins in the right of the subjects to find confirmation of themselves in their actions.⁸⁶

Reconstructing Hegel's ideas liberates potentials for interpretation which can be utilized in awakening consciousness to the problems of late modernity, bringing to the surface a large number of problems of mentality in societies that are going through modernization processes in a geopolitically, historically and culturally diverse, globalized world. Hegel of course could not foresee these. Yet he shed light on a number of phenomena that can be identified as the roots of later problems.

In this chapter, I concentrated on the analysis of some elements connected with the modern principle of subjective freedom. This, however, does not mean that I regard Hegel as a liberal thinker. His powerful and complex normativity and value-orientation *move him towards conservatism*. It is nonetheless true that it is no conservative *partisanship*, or the service of the interests of the Prussian ruler; it is a result of legal, political, and social considerations embedded in a broad framework of social philosophy and philosophy of history. Taylor is right: it is laughable to place Hegel on the spectrum of liberalism and conservatism. If we did that, we could only come to the conclusion that neither party can claim him or reject him, with regard to historical tradition. Hegel walks his own path. His sense of reality, and his complex socio-cultural and broad historical horizons lead him to develop an attitude on the basis of which – and concentrating on the basic features of the structures of modern society, on particularity as the concrete, actual, individual shape of subjective freedom, and the extremes resulting from it – he seeks the conditions and components of the *rational, balanced* operation of modern society, in order to secure the *actual* freedom of modern individuals. This horizon and intention is not identical with political liberalism or political conservatism. At the same time, both traditions are present in Hegel's social theory, although within its own systematic conceptual approach and phenomenological attitude – i.e., in a very peculiar conceptual framework.

⁸⁶ The subject affirms itself in the “more concrete determination” of subjective freedom, which is “the right of the subject to find its satisfaction in the action.” It is not the satisfaction of erotic (desiring) consciousness; it is the normativity of one's assurance in oneself that manifests itself in the satisfaction of the person as such. R, 148 (§ 121).

PART C

HIGHER FORMS OF THE INDIVIDUALS' "EDUCATED
CONSCIOUSNESS" IN MODERNITY. RELATIVIZATION
OF THE ABSOLUTE AND ABSOLUTIZATION OF SUBJECTIVITY

CHAPTER SIX

MODERN INDIVIDUAL'S IDEALTYPICAL RELATION TO GOD: "SUBJECTIVE RELIGIOSITY" AS "FAITH IN FEELING"

... all persons have therefore a consciousness of God (...) as their higher life, as their true dignity, as the Sunday of their lives.¹

1. POSSIBILITIES OF EXPLORING THE EXTRA MEANING IN SYSTEMIC DIMENSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION OF MODERN INDIVIDUAL'S RELIGIOSITY

In the following, I shall focus on the "subjective side" of religion, which Hegel calls "subjective religiosity" or "faith in feeling," and assigns to everyone, as can be seen from the above citation. The question arises: in what sense can *knowledge of God be constitutive* of the self-interpretation, self-conception and self-determination (self-fulfillment) of the modern individual? "Selbstkonzeption" and "Selbst-Konstitution" are the expressions of Brandom, focusing on problems which arise primarily in his explication of the concepts of self-reflection (Selbstreflexion) and self-determination (Selbstbestimmung) in the chapter on morality of the *Philosophy of Right*.² However, Brandom disregards the fact that, in Hegel, these concepts are found in the systematic medium of morality – i.e., at the center of the topic of practical individuality and the modern individual, therefore their interpretive horizon is organized by this "standpoint" (moralischer Standpunkt), or perspective. The reconstruction of Hegel's theory of the individual cannot pass over the "standpoint" or "point of view" of spirit, as a specific perspective: it is part of the interpretive horizon, and thereby constitutive of meaning.³ We gain an extra meaning by reconstructing conceptual constellations.

¹ PR I, 85.

² Cf. R, 131–141 (§§ 104–113).

³ "Thus, it now has its *personality* – and in abstract right the will is no more than personality – as its *object*; the infinite subjectivity of freedom, which now has being *for itself*, constitutes the principle of the *moral point of view*." R, 131–132 (§ 104). On the question of

This defect of the American Hegel renaissance has been pointed out by Höslle, who feels the lack of Hegel's theory of concept.⁴ Nonetheless, neo-pragmatist discussion can and does give important impulses to contemporary Hegel interpretations. We can add, though, that it is also unfortunate to neglect the problem of the *system* in today's debates on Hegel.⁵ In the following, I will argue that a present-day Hegel interpretation can be faithful to Hegel when discussing the questions of system-building: in other words, it can be correct and faithful to Hegel in the Hegelian sense, at the same time fulfilling requirements of up-to-date interpretation.

We have good reason to say that the *Hegelian system can be constitutive* of the (re)construction of Hegel's conception of practical individuality and the modern individual. These two concepts refer to the Hegelian topic around which the neo-pragmatist debates can be arranged. By *practical individuality* we mean the comprehensive "subject" of Hegel's practical philosophy, which includes *all shapes of subjectivity in the medium of the levels and forms of spirit*. It is a systematic, integrating concept which comprehends not only subject-shapes, but also their motivations, practices, and the institutional framework of the latter; it becomes manifest at the intersections of systemic dimensions – first of all, at the intersections of subjective, objective and absolute spirit – as a conceptual complex denoting the relations of these dimensions. It is important to point out, that this conceptual construction – practical individuality – is not what Höslle requires as a "theory of concept": the latter means the conceptuality of the linear system (logic, natural philosophy, philosophy of spirit, including subjective, objective, and absolute spirit). If we reduce Hegelian conceptuality to this basic layer, we get caught in the old trap of systematic Hegel-interpretations. Practical individuality and its historically contextualized shape: modern individuality which is at the center of our work, refer to conceptual formations and constellations which are not to be found at a distinct locus, in this or that chapter or passage, on page number *n*. This conceptual formation presents itself in the *mutual relations, complexes and constellations of the systemic dimensions of spirit (linear and dynamic, internal or "esoteric" and external or "exoteric" dimensions)*.⁶ This construction is also a (re)construction of relevant passages.

moral point of view and the extra meaning of its conceptual constellations, see chapter A.II.3.

⁴ Cf. chapter A.II.1.

⁵ For more details see chapter A.

⁶ See chapter A.

Conceptual constructions and constellations may show how system-bound conceptuality can play a constitutive role in recent discussions and debates. We have gained a sufficiently open conceptual complex to take seriously neo-pragmatist discussions of practices, desires and recognition, linking them with elements of Hegelian system-building. In relation to the general, system-oriented conceptual complex of practical individuality, *modern individual* is its *concrete and individually, as well as historically and socio-culturally determined and determinable shape*. This formation of individuality bound to the various contexts of its life, the individual of modernity is the one mentioned by Hegel in our motto, who faces the questions of the absolute (God) in his or her *individual-particular* life. It is on this horizon, which cannot be separated from socio-cultural contexts, but is at the same time distinctly individual, that the *typically modern phenomenon of "subjective religiosity"* appears.

Hegel's conception of the religiosity of modern human being has been discussed by *Tillich*, who emphasized the *existential* aspect of religion, a basic idea of the young Hegel. In the following, we shall point out that the mature Hegel also preserved this element of religion.

We proceed in the following steps: 1. the problems of allocating religion and the systematic status of "subjective religiosity"; 2. the existential aspect of religion and inwardness; 3. "faith in feeling," the epistemic and individual-existential meanings of the relation to God; 4. the "need of unification" and its subjective satisfaction through "faith in feeling"; 5. extra meaning in the Hegelian discussion of modern religiosity.

2. THE PROBLEMS OF ALLOCATING RELIGION AND THE SYSTEMATIC STATUS OF "SUBJECTIVE RELIGIOSITY"

In the linear system, religion is the middle stage of absolute spirit structured by the epistemic forms of *intuition, representation and concept*: in this relation, religion belongs to representation. Beyond this, however, we find another structural principle in regard of absolute spirit, which is different from the linear and epistemically hierarchical arrangement of art, religion and philosophy. Based on the "perfection" of the medium of concept, philosophy has the highest rank in the first, linear structure. The second structural principle however is not based on epistemological considerations but on the *individual-existential and socio-cultural and historical aspects of religion* (religiosity) and its corresponding *socio-cultural functions*. "*Bildung zur Freiheit*," training and education for freedom, is an

expression pregnant with this set of functions. In the following, we shall focus on this second systemic principle and structure.

Let us quote Hegel himself to elucidate these two different positions of religion in the system. I shall refer to three passages from the mature works, to demonstrate their continuity with early ones in crucial conceptional questions. The “subjective side” of religion is the motive that Hegel uses in both his early and mature works, and therefore an important factor in confirming the said conceptional continuity.

In the third edition of the *Encyclopedia* (1830), in its third volume, namely *The Philosophy of Spirit*, we read the following:

The Absolute is Spirit – this is the supreme definition of the Absolute. To find this definition and to grasp its meaning and burden was, we may say, the ultimate purpose of all education and all philosophy: it was the point to which turned the impulse of all religion and science: and it is this impulse that must explain the history of the world. The word Spirit – and the *representation* of it – was found at an early period: and the spirituality of God is the lesson of Christianity. It remains for philosophy in its own element of the concept to get hold of what was thus *given* as a mental image, and what *implicitly* is the ultimate reality; and that problem is not genuinely, and immanently solved so long as liberty and the concept is not the theme and the soul of philosophy.⁷

In the preface of the second edition of the *Encyclopedia* (1827) we find the following:

Religion is a mode of consciousness in which truth is given to every human being, with any education; the scientific knowledge of truth, however, is a particular mode of consciousness, the labour of which is not taken up by everyone, only a few. The *content is the same*, but – as Homer says of some things that they have two names, one in the language of gods, the other in the language of short-lived humans – there are two languages to this content, one of feeling, representational thought and understanding, thought nested in finite categories and one-sided abstractions, and another of the concrete concept.⁸

The Preface of the *Philosophy of Right* (1820) says:

It is a great obstinacy, the kind of obstinacy which does honour to human beings, that they are unwilling to acknowledge in their attitudes anything which has not been justified by thought – and this obstinacy is the characteristic property of the modern age, as well as being the distinctive principle

⁷ S § 384.

⁸ It only appears in the Hungarian edition of the *Logic*.

of Protestantism. What Luther inaugurated as faith in feeling and in the testimony of the spirit is the same thing that the spirit, at a more mature stage of its development, endeavours to grasp in the *concept* so as to free itself in the present and thus find itself therein.⁹

I do not have enough space here to unfold and compare the manifold contents of these passages. Instead, I limit myself to some remarks relevant for my chosen point. The first and the second passage emphasizes the same object or content: the absolute. At the same time, they emphasize the variances between forms thematizing the absolute – forms of absolute spirit – in this case between philosophy and religion. These variances – in accordance with the linear systemic principle – are explained by the differences between the epistemic character of concept and representation, and the epistemological principle of the conceptual medium of philosophy that implies the hierarchic arrangement.¹⁰ These passages focus on the epistemological criteria of approaching the absolute, above all “truth”; this constitutes the fundamental point of orientation for *philosophy as a scientific* entity. I do not deal here with the metaphysical meanings of this line of thought, the post-Kantian character of which is beyond doubt, anyway.¹¹ Let me just say that this epistemically supported metaphysical perspective directed thematically to the absolute plays a decisive role in the linear articulation and structural arrangement of absolute spirit. Under this perspective – which is tightly connected to logic within the system – philosophy has the highest place value, by its corresponding, appropriate medium of the concept.

The absolute, however, is *spirit* as well. Hegel underlines this fact in the first quotation. This means that the absolute is not taken here only in the general, epistemically founded metaphysical sense of orientation towards God, but is also *contextualized*: on the one hand, the question of the absolute is treated in its relation to the *human* subject which is – in modernity

⁹ R, 22 (Preface).

¹⁰ For the distinction between representation and concept, see SL § 20 and S § 445. – See also Erzsébet Rózsa, “A megbékélés Hegeli felfogása és a Jogfilozófia Előszavának metaforikája,” *Gond*, 11 (1996): 256–286.

¹¹ In the first part of the *Science of Logic*, in the treatment of general division, Hegel points to the antecedents of his own logic in Kant. That subjective character has to be maintained by the concept, is an idea of Kantian origin. Kant's merits can be summed up in the following: “However, if there was to be a real progress in philosophy, it was necessary that the interest of thought should be drawn to the consideration of the formal side, of the “I,” of consciousness as such, that is, of the abstract reference of a subjective awareness to an object, and that in this way the path should be opened for the cognition of the *infinite form*, that is, of the concept.” (GL, 41–42)

taken in Hegel's sense – above all an *individual*, with all of its positive and negative consequences. On the other hand, orientation towards the absolute is placed in *socio-cultural* and *historical* contexts. That is to say, we face a *twofold contextualization*: orientation towards the absolute becomes the question of both subjective-human, individual-existential, and “worldly,” socio-cultural, historical relations, meanings and functions. This contextualization explains why *philosophy* – and not only religion and art – can be conceived of as a *business and function of education and culture*. By this procedure, Hegel *broadens and modifies the Jena program of philosophy as a scientific system*. The contextualization of philosophy, or the forms of absolute spirit in general is made *explicit* by the second passage. In this general, yet clearly articulated context, education can be understood as a *general cultural form and institution*. A form by which the absolute can be mediated to every single human being, “of any education” and becomes available for everyone and anyone. Although in an epistemological sense, the absolute as the highest content can appropriately be expressed in philosophy as science, the “language of the concept” can only address the few, and cannot reach “all human beings of any education,” in contrast to the language of representation, emotion, intellectual thinking; of education, religion or even art.

The forms of subjectivity and “worldly” forms of the absolute are subjected to time: they are historical, and therefore contingent. In this historical context, Hegel regards religion as an earlier shape of knowing God than philosophy. It is exactly this “worldly,” historical, socio-cultural and individual-existential perspective that gives an opportunity to treat the forms of absolute spirit not only as such: absolute spirit transcends its epistemological and metaphysical “purity,” the “pure ideality” of logic, and receives human, subject-related and historical features which features, and their relations come to *life* in *individuals*, become manifest in educational forms and cultural formations, thereby become available not only for living, actual, present subjects, but for subjects of the future as well.

As we can see, Hegel essentially *relativized the linear-epistemological structural arrangement of absolute spirit and the eminent status of philosophy*. First by stating that philosophy is not the first form of absolute spirit; in a historical sense, religion comes first. The other element of relativization is that beside philosophy, religion and education also have an important role in the relation to the absolute. The eminent status of philosophy in absolute spirit is also relativized in Hegel's considerations on the cultural role of the forms of the absolute spirit in the medium of

education.¹² In this relation, religion has the leading role: the primarily cultural task of representing the absolute (God) in a way that is accessible for “all human beings, with any education” is not assigned to philosophy, but to religion. Philosophy could only perform this task if it was transformed into educational material, thus mediating its knowledge of the absolute for “all human beings, with any education.” Hegel – with the exception of his Nuremberg years – is skeptical about this alternative. He thinks that the “tedious work of the concept” – which cannot be spared in philosophy – will always be taken up by the few.

The reason why religion is the cultural formation which is capable of communicating the absolute to “all human beings, with any education” is that it possesses the “language of emotion and representation.”¹³ In religion, due to its distinctive language, the absolute is expressed not just as truth in a scientific sense, i.e., as a truth for the few, like in philosophy, due to its conceptual form of thinking and language, but as a *truth for “all human beings, with any education.”* The distinctive feature of religion is exactly that its language can present, express, and awake the absolute as truth not only as such, but as a “*subjective certainty*” with a *personal* connotation – exactly because it possesses the language of emotion and representation. The Hegelian program of mediating God to every individual can be accomplished through connecting the *universal* epistemic shape and language of religion, the “*language of representation*” with the *individualized* form of “*faith in feeling.*” The *personal practice* of the general cultural function is made possible by this individualized constellation. This two-fold epistemic shape and language of religion is capable of making the knowledge of God a personal one: it can be transformed into the “inner world” (the “feeling soul” based on the principle of “inwardness”) and “particular existence” (the lifeworld) of all individuals. This is *the individually colored function of the culturally and historically contextualized language of representation, emotion, and faith.*

It becomes clear that the *form and language of religion* rests on the *two formations of spirit*. This specific shape and language is linked with the different formations of representation and emotion, which are at the same referred to each other: the formations of *epistemic representation* and the

¹² On the cultural function of philosophy in Hegel, see Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*, 72–75.

¹³ Language is the “perfect expression” of spirit – says Hegel in the *Philosophy of Spirit*. S § 411.

feeling soul of inner individual world constitute a conceptual construction in which the declared *cultural function proves to be performable in actuality*. Relying on these formations makes it possible for us to attribute concrete socio-cultural, historical and personal-individual, existential meanings and functions to language – a general form within the world of spirit – in our relation to God as well.

The need of modern individual to represent, confirm and manifest the truth about God as his or her *own, proper certainty* is directly expressed by the third passage, where Hegel speaks of the “obstinacy” of Luther and Protestantism. He refers here to the claim of modern human beings to found and determine themselves and their own existence. This claim has its origins in subjective freedom, the frequently mentioned basic principle of modernity. The claim to personal confirmation is a consequence of this principle of freedom, the property of the newer age and the actual basis of Protestantism. That is what Hegel calls obstinacy in an emphatic metaphorical way, comprehensible to everyone. Lutheran religion initiated this principle as “faith in feeling,” which is an act of *identical* significance with what philosophy does by grasping it in the concept. (The parallel of Luther and German idealism is a recurring theme of Hegel.) The subjectivity of our knowledge about God – “faith in feeling” – and the subjectivity of our relation to God – the “spiritual witness” – distinguish the religion of modern times and the religiosity of modern human being from the religion of other times and the religiosity of other human beings.

It becomes clear from this context, why Hegel does *not* refer to *representation*, i.e., the appropriate epistemic form, but to “faith in feeling.” “*Faith in feeling*” is not identical with representation even at first sight: this formula expresses a further aspect of religion. “Faith in feeling” is not a pure epistemic/metaphysical formation, but an *existential* aspect affecting the human being as *individual*.¹⁴ This emphasis is especially remarkable in regard to the mentioned cultural function of religion. This function, as we have seen, consists in communicating the knowledge of the absolute (God) to “all human beings, with any education.”¹⁵ Through this mediation, however, the absolute is no longer truth seen under a universal epis-

¹⁴ Tillich pointed out that the young Hegel conceived of existence as personal life, and in this sense he spoke of Hegel's “existential” attitude. Tillich, *Vorlesung über Hegel*, 237 and 277. Henrich discovers the “existential analysis of conscious life” in Hegel's theory of subjectivity in relations to gratitude as a basic human experience. Henrich, *Bewußtes Leben*, 9 and 185–193.

¹⁵ In the Frankfurt fragments, Hegel states that Luther's “faith in feeling” goes back to Jesus, who (like Kant after him) opposes feeling to the law and the commandments.

temological and metaphysical perspective, but “knowledge” with *human* subject-relation, therefore aspiring to subjective certainty, and manifesting itself in a specific form of emotion and faith, which is at the same time socio-culturally and historically contextualized. “Subjective religiosity” articulated this way is not contingent or arbitrary in the broadest, existential dimension of human existence. It is not contingent in a historical sense either: this subjective religiosity originates in the principle of modern subjective freedom, and is thus bound to a certain historical era. For this reason, in the process of articulation and institutionalization of its fundamental principle of subjective freedom, subjective religiosity becomes a structural element of modernity. In other words, subjective religiosity belongs *structurally* to the world based on the modern principle of freedom.

These connections, with their layers of meaning and functions, can only be adequately explored if we take into account the linear articulation of the system (subjective, objective, and absolute spirit, and within the latter, intuition, representation, concept) which is no doubt the *dominant though not exclusive composition of the system*, as well as the circular structures of the system, i.e. the relations, constellations, and complexities of the elements and layers of the system.¹⁶ Beyond this, we can show by pointing to the twofold nature of philosophy (scientific system and educational form with cultural function) that the forms of absolute spirit come into a different kind of contact with each other in a cultural-historical context and their functions in it, than in the linear system. In this regard religion will be the most important formation that is capable of mediating the knowledge of the absolute to “every human being with any degree of education.” The last one (or more precisely, the second one) thus becomes first.

From the above a few important consequences follow, not only for the present discussion. Taking into consideration and applying the overall structure of spirit including both the linear and the circular structures, seems a good method to shed light on subjective religiosity as the religiosity of the modern human being. Questions arising this way could not even be posed if we followed *solely* the linear structure. The exploration must take into consideration such methodological principles, procedures, and

¹⁶ For more details see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Individualitás, fogalmiság és rendszer: a hegeli gyakorlati individualitás státusza és jelentése,” *Kellék*, 33–34 (2007): 39–62. Cf. the analysis of Brigitta Balogh of the relation between linear interpretation and dynamic circularity. Brigitta Balogh, *A szellem és az idő: Identitás, cselekvés és temporalitás Hegelnél A szellem fenomenológiájában* (Budapest: l'Harmattan, 2009), 33–74.

terms of Hegel, as relationality, perspective (“point of view”), “totality” as complexes and constellations of concepts.¹⁷ This dynamic dimension of the system offers a potential for interpretation for our exploration of the different but interconnected structural elements, arrangements and layers of meanings of religion, which helps to avoid those walls that would inevitably stand in our way due to the rigidity and alleged exclusivity of the linear principle. With this interpretive potential I do not call into doubt the importance and validity of the linear arrangement. I only want to point out how *Hegel himself relativized the linear arrangement*, and what consequences follow from it. Involving the two-dimensional basic structure of spirit into contemporary discussions gives an *opportunity* to make visible and usable those considerations of Hegel that remain hidden in the linear structure of the system, although they are immanent in the system, and – not incidentally – carry conceptual contents and methodological procedures which can be relevant also today.¹⁸

3. THE EXISTENTIAL ASPECT OF RELIGIOSITY AND INWARDNESS

Tillich's 1931/32 Frankfurt lectures lay great emphasis on the existential aspect of religiosity in the young Hegel.¹⁹ What is interesting for us here and now, though, is not Tillich's interpretation in itself, but the fact to which it draws our attention: that the young Hegel *lent a personal character to religion*. This is true of the mature Hegel as well, who linked this aspect with the self-interpretation and self-determination of the modern individual, i.e., with the central elements of the late theory of practical individuality.

We find some important motives in the early Frankfurt conception of “subjective religion,” which appear again in the mature conception. The fundamental characteristic of modern religion, which the mature Hegel

¹⁷ Relationality is a term used by Brandom as well, when treating the “specific Hegelian approach to thought and action.” Brandom refers to an important feature of Hegel's expressivism, the mutual relationship of the explicit and the implicit regarding the task of logic in relation to the norms of practical rationality. Cf. Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen*, 248–254.

¹⁸ Cf. chapter A.II.2.

¹⁹ This is exactly the horizon of interpretation for Tillich's discussion of the young Hegel until the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. Tillich, *Vorlesung über Hegel*. The existential aspect remained important for the mature Hegel as well, as the present discussion has pointed out. It hopefully serves as an evidence for the contentual-conceptual continuity of Hegel's work in a fundamental question.

calls "faith in feeling" is also found in this early text. "It lies in the concept of religion, that it is not a mere science of God and His properties, our relation and the relation of the world to Him and the permanence of our soul – which would be perceivable for us by mere reason or be known in some other way – not a mere historical or reasoning knowledge, but something that interests the heart, and has an influence on our feelings and the determination of our will."²⁰

Hegel treats *subjective religion as a practical motivation* here: it determines our will, therefore it has a special status by its influence on "actions and way of thinking."²¹ Subjective religion has *anthropological and existential* aspects as well: it is "manifested by feelings and actions," it is "something individual," and "modified in every human being in a different way."²² What is crucial, however, is that the elements of subjective religion can be understood as "moving causes" (*Beweggründe*). As practical motivations, they "exercise pressure on feeling, the determination of the will to actions."²³ The reference of general anthropological background to practical motivations becomes manifest at the center of the Self. As Hegel remarks, it is human beings *themselves* who have to act, affect, and determine themselves.²⁴ These early elements of subjective religiosity show an obvious continuity with the mature conception of the spirit.

Without going into further details of the continuity between the early and late concepts of subjective religiosity, let us now turn to the conception found in the manuscript of the 1821 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. This manuscript is of special significance, as it is one of the few authentic texts on religion by the mature Hegel. Beside authenticity, we have another reason to take a look at this manuscript: it offers a possibility of comparison with the 1820 *Philosophy of Right* and the 1823 *lectures on the philosophy of art*. The latter texts are of crucial importance for the theory of the modern individual and the conception of practical individuality: they are important documents of the *systematic conceptual explanation* and socio-cultural as well as artistic *contextualization* of modern individuality.

²⁰ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum," in *Frühe Schriften*, 11.

²¹ Hegel, "Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum," 12.

²² Hegel, "Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum," 14.

²³ Hegel, "Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum," 34.

²⁴ Hegel, "Fragmente über Volksreligion und Christentum," 32.

In the 1821 manuscript on the philosophy of religion, Hegel states that the “subjective aspect” of religion is an “essential moment.”²⁵ The subjective aspect is treated as a *practical relation* here as well, which Hegel describes as the “*inner history*” of “*mind and heart*.”²⁶ What we face here is the self-creation of the modern individual: self-constitution, to quote Brandom’s phrase. Modern individuals constitute themselves in their “inner history,” in the formations of emotion and inner world. This self-creation of the individuals – the “subjective side” of the Faustian principle of European culture – on the ground of the inner world and in the medium of inner history is a basic feature of the birth and essence of the modern individual. The conceptual constellation of inner history and inner world refers to the division that occurs between the self and the world, the subject and the object, the human being and God, and inevitably leads to “vacillating attitude.” This in turn raises the claim to a new kind of unification, which was first mentioned by Hölderlin, and became a basic motive of Fichte’s and Schelling’s philosophy of identity as well. This existential situation prompts the divided individual to search for *identity and integrity*. The individuals of the modern age – exactly because of the expansive, penetrating nature of the contradictions of subjective freedom – are much more dependent on themselves in their search for identity and integrity than the individuals of earlier ages. They cannot reach identity and integrity without reflecting on their inner world and their own history and without self-determination, which are both acts of self-constitution. Traditions, customs, traditional norms, the elements of cultural remembrance are insufficient *in themselves*. They have to rely on their *own inwardness* as a result of subjective freedom. This inwardness (*Innerlichkeit*) is one of the basic achievements and components of modern culture, as Charles Taylor has pointed out.²⁷

In Hegel, inwardness is the principle and formation of spirit in modernity, and as such, it has an effect on all forms of human culture: on art, philosophy, and religion alike. In religion, this turn towards inwardness starts with the Reformation. As the 1821 manuscript of the philosophy of religion says: “it is infinitely important to have emphasized this subjective side so much, the side which Luther called faith.”²⁸ The essence of the Reformation is “the eternal process (of knowing) in which the subject *posits*

²⁵ PR, 188.

²⁶ PR, 190.

²⁷ Taylor 1989, 111–207.

²⁸ PR, 192.

itself as identical with its essence."²⁹ Hegel describes the identity of the subject with itself as oneness.³⁰ The subjective search for personal identity, which is mediated by the relation of God as the absolute to the subject – to every individual in modernity – expresses the "profound need" of religion, the "absolute desire for something firm."

The identity problems of modern individual appear once again, which Hegel discussed in detail in the morality chapter of the *Philosophy of Right* shortly before his lectures on the philosophy of religion. In *morality*, existence is given as *individual existence*. At the level of objective spirit, it is no longer immediate existence, as it used to be in subjective spirit, but a mediated form of existence with *both "theoretical," self-reflective and practical, self-determining features*.³¹ It is more than interesting that in morality, Hegel discusses the good without reference to the question of our relation to God, which would have been unthinkable for Kant. To put it differently: it is exactly the systemic place of practical (and modern) individuality, the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right*, where Hegel does *not* discuss the problem of modern individual's religiosity. It is obviously out of the question, that Hegel would want to eliminate religion and religiosity from modern individual existence.

How can we get out of this dead-end street?

One possibility would be to turn to the institutional context of religiosity, i.e., the topic of the *church*.³² The chapter on the state in the *Philosophy of Right* dwells on the question of the church at great length. However, I will not pursue this path. On the one hand, it is not my purpose here to deal with the relations between church and state. On the other – and that is my main reason – the topic of subjective religion and the subjective side of religion, i.e., the aspects which are related to the existence of the modern individual are not rooted in an institution, e.g., the church. The formula "faith in feeling" sheds light on the basic features of modern individuals' subjective religiosity; it cannot be mistaken for institutional religion. Hegel precludes this possibility precisely in the passage in

²⁹ PR, 193 (emphasis added).

³⁰ PR, 193.

³¹ For the eminent status and the significance of practical individuality see the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right*, R, 131–136 (§§ 104–106).

³² Brandom makes an interesting remark on Hegel's achievement as compared to Kant's: norms as concepts in Hegel "have an earthly-real connection as he understands normative status as social status, and every transcendental constitution as a social institution as well." Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen*, 52.

question. Examining “religious disposition” in its relation to the state and the church, he makes the following remark:

The content of religion is absolute truth, and it is therefore associated with a disposition of the most exalted kind. As intuition, feeling, and representational cognition whose concern is with God as the unlimited foundation and cause on which everything depends [...] Religion is the relation to the absolute in the form of feeling, representational thought, and faith, and within its all-embracing centre, everything is merely accidental and transient.³³

To find a closer explanation of the formula “faith in feeling,” let us turn away from the world of objective spirit in the *Philosophy of Right* to the topic of subjective spirit. We move somehow like a crab, *from absolute spirit to objective and from objective to subjective*. We suspend the dominant – although not exclusive – linear principle of the structure, but we do not get rid of it. Our procedure is motivated by the conviction that the nature of this relation of the structural layers of spirit and its corresponding concepts, which is the basic feature of the circular-dynamic structure, opens the possibility of a *constitutive* procedure in the Hegelian sense. With its help, we can give correct and meaningful answers to some questions which cannot even be posed on the first level of the system.

4. “FAITH IN FEELING.” THE EPISTEMIC AND INDIVIDUAL-EXISTENTIAL MEANINGS OF THE RELATION TO GOD

Beyond representation, the epistemically adequate form of religion, which belongs to theoretical spirit in the framework of subjective spirit, Hegel introduces *emotion* into the problematics of subjective religiosity. In the chapter “Problems of allocating religion and the systematic status of ‘subjective religiosity’ ” we pointed out that Hegel attached an *individual-existential* meaning to emotion. In addition, he distinguished two *epistemic forms* of religion, representational thought and emotion, both of them having different *linguistic* characteristics. However, we have not dealt with the latter in detail yet, which is no accident. The Preface of the *Philosophy*

³³ R, 292–293 (§ 270). The early motive of positivity appears once again in the *Philosophy of Right*: “But the state remains essentially different from religion, for what it requires has the shape of a legal duty, and it is indifferent to the emotional attitude with which this duty is performed. The field of religion, on the other hand, is inwardness; and just as the state would prejudice the right of inwardness if it imposed its requirements in a religious manner, so also does the Church, if it acts like a state and imposes penalties, degenerate into a tyrannical religion.” R, 303 (§ 270).

of Right makes only a passing reference to the special significance and function of this form in respect of subjective religiosity. To demonstrate the *concrete status* of *emotion* included in the formula "faith in feeling" as an *epistemic and existential form*, we have to turn to the *Philosophy of Spirit*. This encyclopedic work treats emotion in three relations: in the medium of the feeling soul, practical emotion, and finally free spirit.³⁴

The *first meaning* of emotion points to its *confused* nature: in the feeling soul, the soul enters into correlation with its immediate being individually.³⁵ Feeling soul is the totality of the world of inner individuality and particularity. "Every essential relation" is presented in emotion, without however being distinct from each other. "Emotional totality," "emotional life," "emotional existence" are Hegel's expressions, which refer to the yet undifferentiated epistemic and existential character of emotion. "Concentrated individuality" appears as a confused, unarticulated shape and level in the heart and in feeling. Emotion – even the feeling itself – is a sort of epistemic *and* existential immediacy, and a concentrated, i.e., not yet articulated individuality, which is different from both rational, articulated consciousness and "rationally" articulated way of existence.

The *second meaning* is found in *practical emotion*. We read in § 471 of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, that the ideas of God, law, and ethical life can also be *felt*. By highlighting the felt forms of these ideas, Hegel points to the *expressivity* of reason: to the fact that beside the rational elements and forms of knowledge, it contains non-rational elements and forms as well.³⁶ However, the feeling of ideas is only a limited one: "feeling is only the form of the immediate and peculiar individuality of the subject."³⁷ The point of reference and the measure is reason and understanding: the truth and the real rationality of the heart and will can only consist in the universality of understanding, and not in the individuality of the feeling.³⁸ In contrast with – understanding (*Verstand*) which is divisive and analytic, reason (*Vernunft*) is an integrating medium: "there is only one reason, in

³⁴ These relations manifest that Hegel treats feeling as independent in an epistemic and individual existential sense. This independence, however, becomes relative in the context of society and the lifeworld. We also see how the linear structure of the system becomes relative internally, as the problematic of the Absolute is thematized at the level of the subjective spirit and its shapes. Cf. Rózsa, "Individualitás, fogalmiság és rendszer."

³⁵ S § 390.

³⁶ The problem of expressive reason has been introduced by Charles Taylor in describing modern identity. See Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.

³⁷ S, § 471.

³⁸ S, § 471.

feeling, volition, and thought.”³⁹ Hegel points to the limits of feeling from this rational point of view, but at the same he emphasizes the *integrating role of feeling*: the idea of God can be felt, which is the form of the proper individuality of the subject, or in other words, *existence*. The immediate form of individuality as existence is relevant for the topic of individuality as it provides a point of departure for self-determining individuality.⁴⁰ Still, it is not this, but (theoretical and practical) self-reference as *self-reflection and self-determination* that can lead us out of the unreflected and indeterminate modes of feeling and individual existence. It opens the way to the higher forms of both knowledge and individual existence, like “particular existence” and the actual lifeworld that unfolds from it. Hegel introduces this in relation to the abstract Self of subjective free spirit, to be explicated later in the framework of objective spirit, in the forms of existence belonging to the socio-culturally and individually determined forms of subjectivity characterizing the family and civil society.⁴¹

The *third meaning of feeling* is found in the passage on *free spirit*. In § 482 of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, the idea of freedom is the “own essence of spirit.” The idea of every human being’s freedom came into the world historically through Christianity, which holds that individual as such has an infinite value. This freedom is first the “principle of mind and heart”: it appears in the framework of the subjective spirit, then develops into legal, ethical, religious, and scientific actuality in the contexts of objective spirit. It comes to light again, that Hegel places the subjective element of freedom – subjective religiosity – at the intersection of a number of dimensions; embedding it in *historical and individual-existential contexts, as well as in concrete lifeworlds*. These multiple contexts shed light on the transition of the subjective-inner side of religion and its shape, “faith in feeling” to the “particular existence” and concrete-particular lifeworld of the individuals. This transformation takes place in the transition from subjective spirit to objective spirit, and expresses the fact that *the historical achievements of modern freedom are also subjective-individual components of freedom*. These achievements permeate the whole existence and lifeworld of modern individuals, as well as their “worldly existence,” their emotional and intellectual world. This complex context reveals the importance of Hegel’s insight, that the topic of the absolute (God) has a

³⁹ S, § 471.

⁴⁰ S, § 471.

⁴¹ Cf. chapter B.I.

peculiar character in modernity *not only through the subjectivity of freedom and inwardness, including the world of feelings,*⁴² *but also through its interweaving with "worldly existence" and the "prose of modern world."* In this conceptual constellation, subjective religiosity obtains new meanings, too. We can also understand why the *structures of objective spirit* have a *complementary* character: objective spirit can only be regarded as a social institution in a determinate, limited sense.⁴³ It is also a series of subjective inner worlds and shapes of individuality: *the framework, arena, and place of remembrance of every individual's inner world, own history, and particular lifeworld.*

It is only in this complex context integrating subjective and objective spirit that feeling – including "faith in feeling" expressing the absolute – obtains its *concrete meaning in lifeworld*. Lifeworld, the systematic place of which is found in the relations of morality, family, and civil society, i.e., in the medium of objective spirit, does not only integrate worldly, objective spheres of life. Temper as a peculiar fabric of feelings, constitutes the inner space of the free individual, which is a component of all individuals' independent inner world and own biography, and also an internal element of their "particular," "worldly existence" and lifeworld.⁴⁴ The eminent status of worldly existence does not diminish the value of inner world. We need this inner world in our relations to the absolute, in religious and artistic relations, as well as in our private relationships or in exercising our profession. *Inwardness* as a distinct region of subjectivity has great significance, which Hegel expresses emphatically saying that the infinity and absolute value of the human being is in inwardness. This *internal linkage with the absolute through inwardness is a fundamental characteristic of modern religiosity* – in spite, or perhaps because of the profane character of worldly existence. This inwardness makes it possible for every single human being to have *not only consciousness of God, but also subjective certainty of unity with God* (or of the lack of it). Faith in God is the certainty of one's own freedom (or the lack of this certainty). Knowledge of God cannot be separated from one's own life built on the principles of inwardness and subjective freedom, not even if it is a failed life, lacking freedom. The main point

⁴² Hegel's recurring critique of Jacobi concerns the treatment of emotions as immediate subjectivity; it is not a critique of emotions in general.

⁴³ The importance of social institutions is highlighted by a number of authors in recent American discussions of Hegel, e.g., Brandom, *Begründen und Begreifen*, 248–254.

⁴⁴ For the status of inner world as one's own inner space, see Hegel's remark in the 1821 manuscript of the lectures on the philosophy of religion: "Slaves have no inner space, inner extension, comprehensive soul."

is that *knowledge about God and relation to God can only become truth for the modern individual, by their own certainty and decision*. This certainty, however, is *ab ovo* deficient, since it is rooted in the formal, empirically universal principle of freedom and rights in modernity. Hegel repeatedly calls attention to this. This existential situation can lead to a problematic knowledge about God, which *always remains questionable*, and also to the failure of the life reliant on this knowledge. In spite of all this, Hegel sees something great in subjective and formal modern freedom, which is shown by his conception of subjective religiosity and faith in feeling.

However, if knowledge about God is so tightly connected to the individual's own certainty, *subjectivity can be unleashed*, as Hegel points out in the last paragraph of the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right*, where he discusses the extreme forms of subjectivity. The predominance of subjective religiosity and certainty gives rise to *different alternatives in our relation to God*, all of which express the claim of self-determination. If this claim loses its measure, our relation to God can be subjectivized. Hegel took note of the "God is dead" alternative very early, in his *Faith and Knowledge*, rejecting it then and later as well. It is all the more interesting, that the mature Hegel returned to the idea several times. In his view, the main problem was that the great significance of subjective certainty – and its basis, subjective freedom – could lead to a "*vacillating attitude*" in the ultimate questions of human life. This is where Hegel saw one of the biggest difficulties of modern individual existence. This unstable existential situation explains the necessity of a basic function of subjective religion, namely the need for God as a need for synthesis.⁴⁵

5. THE "NEED FOR SYNTHESIS" AND ITS SUBJECTIVE SATISFACTION THROUGH "FAITH IN FEELING"

To know God not by some deceased positive doctrine, but in the form of "faith in feeling" serves the purpose of satisfying the need for unification with the absolute already in the young Hegel. Relation to God in faith is ours as thinking and free beings, which is true of all of us: "every human being, with any education." This, however, does not derive from our universal human existence, as in Kant, but from our particular, individual existence.

⁴⁵ This motive indicates a conceptional continuity in the oeuvre. The need for philosophy is discussed in the same manner in the *Differenzschrift*: D 89–94.

Nevertheless, this is only a *principle*. How does it look in reality? According to Hegel's view, faith as the subjective and inward form of religiosity *can* become a component of an individual's lifeworld, but it is *not necessary or inevitable*. On the one hand, God cannot be eliminated from human existence; on the other hand, God can remain unreflected or be excluded from modern people's lives.⁴⁶ Hegel cannot accept the "God is dead" thesis: God must exist and must *manifest* Himself *for us*, modern individuals, not for the sake of religious dogma and churchly interests, but to shed light on the own peculiar meaning of life of the human being as *this* (every or any) individual. Subjective religiosity has its origins in an elementary existential need hidden in divided existence, which cannot be escaped. This is a metaphysical need in the Kantian sense: a need for metaphysics not as a science, but as an anthropological endowment. This need, however, does not have a universally valid, adequate answer and form of satisfaction: it is every individual's own choice and decision how to react to it and find its satisfaction.

According to Hegel, "infinitely subjective, free" individuals are inclined to *extreme subjectivity* in religion as well: their approach in questions regarding the meaning of their own existence is often infinitely subjective and arbitrary. This has a cultural and historical background: since their relation to themselves, others, and God is no longer rooted in tradition, they have to rely on themselves, even though religious communities are of great importance for Hegel. As infinitely free beings, modern individuals do not search for God only, but search for themselves as well. However, they are not always aware of this fact; this insight requires deep self-reflection, and is not everyone's property. It is a question of free choice and one's own decision, not primarily of education. Modern religiosity therefore contains the alternatives of knowledge and ignorance, false or inappropriate knowledge of God, including the "God is dead" alternative.

Hegel felt precisely the gains and losses of modern subjective freedom. In his analysis, its main defect consist in the contingency, arbitrariness, and fragmentation of human life as individual existence. Its result, "vacillating attitude," is one of the crucial mental and behavioral consequences of subjective freedom, treated in social context in the *Philosophy of Right*,

⁴⁶ The extreme form of modern religiosity, expressed in the thesis of "God is dead" is treated already by the young Hegel. He also makes the connection with the inclination of modern subjectivity to go into extremes discussed later in § 140 of the *Philosophy of Right*.

and as the problematic behavior of the protagonist of modernity, the honest citizen in the medium of art.⁴⁷ “Vacillating attitude” in our relation to God is also a subject matter of the 1821 *manuscript on the philosophy of religion*. The desire to consolidate our existence derives from this deficient stance; it is expressed in the “need for synthesis” which is at the same time a religious need.⁴⁸ This need can be satisfied – in principle – in the case of every individual. Its epistemic form and basis in inner world is “faith in feeling.” The satisfaction of this need, however, is just a possibility, which may or may not be fulfilled. Retaining our vacillating attitude also depends mainly on our own decision.

Let us now return to the question *whether religiosity is a constitutive element in modern individuals’ self-interpretation and self-determination*. We may now reply that knowledge of God and relation to God *can* be included in modern individuals’ self-interpretation and self-determination. This knowledge and relation *can* play a constitutive role in their reflection on their own lives, and the practical determinations thereof, but it is not *necessarily* the case. Hegel finds it desirable that *faith as a peculiar kind of knowledge about God linked with feeling should be available for every individual with any education*. In his view, our subjective relation to God can be shaped by living *faith* and *rational insight*, and it has a significant import on the quality of individual life conduct. Nonetheless, he was sober enough to recognize the complex character of this relation and the extreme consequences of its subjectivity, one of which is Pascal’s thesis on “God’s death.”

The principle of one’s own decision, which is based on every individual’s right of self-determination and “right to particularity,” remains valid in our relation to God. In the ultimate questions of life, Hegel assigns decision to “every individual, every human being with any education.” It thus becomes clear that what is obvious and unequivocal in the linear and hierarchic dimension of the absolute spirit – i.e., that representational thought is the middle epistemic level of our cognition of the absolute, corresponding to the essence of religion – simply does not work in the second systemic dimension, namely the dynamic-circular structure. The considerations on the church in the objective spirit cannot orientate us either, since Hegel thinks that the question of the individuals’ relation to God must be decided by the individuals themselves. However, the

⁴⁷ Cf. chapter C.III.4.

⁴⁸ D, 89–94.

consistency of this view, its immanent place in the system and its constitutive significance will become clear only through the reconstruction of the second dimension of the system, and the extra meaning in it.

6. EXTRA MEANING IN THE HEGELIAN DISCUSSION OF MODERN RELIGIOSITY

In his interpretation of the "subjective side" of religion, Hegel emphasized the tensions in modern religiosity. His considerations could hardly be comprehended solely from the perspective of absolute spirit, in which he attached a firm, sometimes rigid systematic forms to religion. The exciting and timely topic of subjective religiosity *in the second meaning of the system* and in an investigation based on its structural principles, i.e., it can be reconstructed in the *internal relations of the spirit*.

In the course of our reconstruction, we have faced the complexity of our relation to God: this relation contains epistemic, existential, and socio-cultural (historical) aspects and layers of meaning. Representational thought and "faith in feeling" are forms in which knowledge about God as a religious-theoretical relation *and* "practical relation" to God can be reconstructed. However, representational thought and faith are not only different in their epistemic and articulated forms, but also in their systematic place-values and functions. In the linear system, in the framework of the absolute spirit, representational thought is the epistemically preferred form of religion. In this framework, religion is treated metaphysically, in its relation to the absolute as truth, and can be conceived of as an abstract, universal form, which is not connected to any concrete culture, and is neither historically nor individually determinate. In this first sense of the system, Hegel discusses religious representation in comparison with two other forms of absolute spirit, namely art and philosophy, referring it to *the intuitive epistemic form of art, and the conceptual epistemic form of philosophy*. This is how the strongly hierarchical conceptual structure is generated in the linear system, placing religion at an intermediary level of the absolute spirit, based on its epistemological potential and deficit. At the same time, however, Hegel understands religion and the whole topic of the absolute as a *topic of spirit*. This second dimension – socio-cultural and individual contextualization – raises the claim of every human being's knowledge of and relation to God. In this dimension we already transcend the predominantly linear and hierarchical framework of absolute spirit. At this second level of the system, emphasis falls on the *socio-cultural*

functions of the forms of absolute spirit and their influence on *individual life conduct and existence*. The socio-cultural function consists primarily in the requirement that the absolute should be available to “*every human being with any education*.” That is exactly why Hegel attaches to religion another epistemic form which he identifies in the adequate formations of “faith in feeling,” the “subjective side” of religion, or “subjective religiosity.” Faith, however, does not have a fixed position in the linear and hierarchic system, while feeling as the medium of faith is one of the great subject matters of subjective spirit. Faith, however, has no connection yet with any of the cultural forms: in the subjective spirit, faith has no contentual determination neither in an individual subjective, nor in a historical sense. Therefore the meaning or the significance of the formula “faith in feeling” cannot be determined on the first level of the system. We have to keep in sight and refer to each other the internal perspectives, relations, and configurations (intuition, representation, concept) of absolute *spirit*. Hegel’s thoughts on religion and religiosity can only be reconstructed faithfully if we do not remain within absolute spirit, but continue our investigations at the intersections of subjective and objective spirit. As a result, it turns out that such important aspects and elements of subjective religiosity as “faith in feeling” are elucidated by Hegel not in the dimension of religion in the framework of objective spirit, but in its relationship with subjective spirit. We can reconstruct the status and meaning of “faith in feeling” from the internal relations of subjective spirit, the relations of the subjective and the objective spirit, and the relations of both to the absolute spirit. It makes necessary the inclusion of the second dimension of the system, which provides us with extra meaning regarding the topic of religiosity.

In the circular dimension relativizing, correcting, and at the same time, supplementing and enriching the linear structure of absolute spirit (and its corresponding structures and passages), we find considerations which could not even be dealt with in the linear system.⁴⁹ “*Faith in feeling*” as an epistemic form of knowledge about God is different from and more than representational thinking. Faith in feeling reveals the cultural historical background (Lutheran Protestantism as individual involvement and inwardness), and the existential aspect of modern religiosity.⁵⁰ This form

⁴⁹ For a more detailed discussion see chapters A.II.2. and 3.

⁵⁰ Henrich highlights the same existential aspect without using the term of religiosity. “For it is conceivable that the basis of our world is something finite. However, if we think of it as something absolute, unconditional and comprehensive in its potentiality, we have to think of it as something that makes our conscious life possible. Therefore, it

of feeling points to the subjectivization of religion, which cannot even occur in representation and concept directed towards the truth of the absolute; or rather, it can occur, but only as a deficit and not as an extra meaning.

We can now conclude that the second dimension of the discussion of religion is in tight connection with Hegel's theory of modernity. Reflection on one's own life and the crucially important modern right of self-determination can lead to consequences that Hegel examines and explores on the second level, or in the second dimension of the system.

It is also interesting but not incomprehensible that the development of *subjective religiosity* is not mentioned at all in the chapter on morality of the *Philosophy of Right*, the central passage of modern individuality. We can sense a sort of neutrality and reserve in Hegel, who keeps distance from claims regarding individuals' religiosity found in churches and dogmas. Some elements of his youthful critique of dead institutions and dogmas ("positivity") resurface in this restraint. It is also clear that the basic elements of the mature Hegel's theory of modernity are the individuals' right to self-determination and their "right to particularity." These rights as "worldly" elements have great significance in individual life conduct as I have already pointed out. This cardinal point of his theory of modernity precludes both unconditional acceptance of doctrines, dogmas, and institutions of Christianity, as well as any "demand" of religiosity. At the same time he emphasizes that modern human being is confronted time and again with ultimate questions (the question of God among them), while a *single, ultimate or absolute answer is no longer possible*. We can get no comfort, no unequivocal answer for this crucial question.

Hegel's idea of modern subjective religiosity has a few further lessons. It turns out that modern individual – the historically and individually concrete shape of practical individuality – endeavors to posit everything as his or her *own*. This egocentrism involves knowledge about and relation to God, which takes shape in subjective religiosity, to quote Hegel. Ego-centrism – the Faustian nature of European human being – has become a basic feature of not only the practices of modern individuals, but of their existence in general. This broadened horizon of individuality offers a *system-conforming* interpretative standpoint beyond the topic of

can be thought of as supra-personal, but it cannot be thought of without the grounding relationship which knowledge and life means in its knowledge of itself." Henrich, *Bewußtes Leben*, 190.

modern religiosity, e.g., for those practices which stand in the focus of contemporary neo-pragmatist debates inspired and influenced by Hegel, which usually do not even raise issues of the system. Approximating the practices and the twofold dimension of the Hegelian system offers possibilities for tackling these questions. I attempted to shed light on one of the possibilities in this chapter reconstructing the Hegelian theme of modern religiosity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HEGEL'S MODERN ANTIGONE IN THE *PHENOMENOLOGY* OF THE SPIRIT: SYMPTOMS OF THE MODERN INDIVIDUAL'S MEDIOCRITY IN A GREAT PERSONALITY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

In the ethical household [...] the relationships of the woman are based, not on feeling, but on the universal. The difference between the ethical life of the woman and that of the man consists just in this, that in her vocation as an individual and in her pleasure, her interest is centred on the universal and remains alien to the particularity of desire ; whereas in the husband these two sides are separated [...] he thereby acquires the right of desire.¹

1. THE FACES OF ANTIGONE IN THE PHENOMENOLOGY

The Antigone of the *Phenomenology* is a great individual who cannot possibly serve as a model for either her own age, or for individuals of other ages. Still, in a quite peculiar way, Hegel assigned this role to her. For this very reason, Antigone is *ab ovo* a controversial character in Hegel's interpretation. Her greatness and her hindrances both have the same source, as Hegel points out in the *Philosophy of Right*: she lacks "feeling subjective substantiality" and inwardness. He refers to the *Phenomenology*, where the "opposition of the highest order" was an opposition "in ethics and therefore in tragedy, and one which is individualized in femininity and masculinity."² Antigone's unique and unparalleled character is grounded in what the *Phenomenology* describes as *pure ethical life*, which is radically different from *actual ethical life*. Antigone's world is the *tragic* ground of pure ethical life: this world, and tragedy with it, is doomed to fall. In contrast, "actual ethical life" which supersedes the tragical marks

¹ P, 274–275.

² Feeling subjective ethical life is a basic disposition of modern individuality, belonging primarily to modern woman's existence. In Antigone, it has not reached its "full actualization." Her disposition originates in the "law of the ancient gods, and of the chthonic realm" as "eternal law," of which "noone knows whence it came" R, 206 (§ 166).

the beginning of a new world, with a future that is still unimaginable. This world, – as a novel ethical formation – will only unfold itself in the modern age.³ “Actual ethical life” will be the foundation (in the lifeworld) of the *mediocrity* of modern characters, which Hegel judges both in his aesthetics and his *Philosophy of Right* rather negatively, and not only from an artistic point of view. However, already in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel does not only depict the tragic Antigone, but makes her character more complicated. He elevates, almost tears Antigone out of the framework of her inevitably declining world: he transforms her greatness, which becomes manifest in the pure ethical life of her attitude towards death, and which is as rightful as it is tragic, into the world of “actual ethical life.” This brings about the metamorphosis of the tragic Antigone of “pure ethical life.” This change is the result of the fact that Hegel *projects the character of Antigone to the social models of “actual ethical life” in modernity – to female roles as well. Thereby, however, not only the character of Antigone is hurt: this also deforms the social and gender role of the woman and the mother, which belongs to another world, later developments, and not to the original world of Antigone.*

In the *Phenomenology*, in the passage where Hegel touches on the problem of novel gender roles connected to the modern world of “actual ethical life,” he contrasts woman’s role to man’s new social and gender role. These remarks point beyond the character of the ancient Antigone, or the sisterly role described after Hegel’s own sister.⁴ This enlargement (*Vergrößerung*) of Antigone’s character is found in the context of the relationship between brother and sister, where Hegel passes over from the explication of sisterly role to that of the task of the mother and the woman.⁵ This text distinguishes between three dimensions of female existence. The first point of reference is the ancient Antigone, the second is sisterly role, and the third is the social and gender role of woman at the beginning of modernity.⁶ Here Hegel transforms some features of the ancient Antigone to the second and third type of female roles. In other words, the *shadow of the ancient Antigone* is cast over Hegel’s description

³ The difference between ancient and modern ethical life is emphasized by Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 83–91.

⁴ Hegel’s sister, Christiane is of special importance for the conception of the *Phenomenology*. Cf. Hans-Christian Lucas, “An Mademoiselle Christiane Hegel: Ein unveröffentlichter Brief Hegels und ein Briefkonzept des Dekans Göritz,” *Hegel-Studien*, 22 (1987): 9–16.

⁵ Cf. P, 266–289 – On the enlargement (*Vergrößerung*) of the concept of subject see Pinkard, “Innen, Außen und Lebensformen,” 256.

⁶ P, 275.

of his relation to his sister, as well as his discussion of modern female role. At the same time, he emphasizes that the ethical ground of Antigone's tragedy, pure ethical life is gone once and for all, and is now closed before later ages.

He still endeavors to transform the greatness of Antigone to female existence as such, and thereby preserve it for later ages. Thus, Hegel's interpretation of Antigone is filled with conceptional difficulties and contradictions. We have to bear in mind, though, that in Hegel's view, a merely historical interpretation of tragedy and tragical greatness is not a complete, or philosophically motivated approach. For him, the basic feature of philosophy is at stake, which in this relation involves the question of how tragedy can contribute to our "world-understanding" (Pöggeler), and – let us add – self-understanding.⁷ In this sense, tragedy does not and cannot vanish completely: even if it loses its former eminent historical status, it remains a standard for the self-interpretation and world-interpretation of individuals in later ages. This paradigmatic function however is not to be confused with the ideal of classicism, marked by such names as e.g., Winckelmann.⁸ It is rather a philosophical-hermeneutical, meaning constituting function which philosophy cannot be deprived of in Hegel.⁹

It does not alter the fact that in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel takes no notice of the limits of "updating" Antigone, i.e. of the basic importance of distinguishing between the historical and hermeneutical perspective. Consequently, he merges the world of the ancient Antigone with the modern world and the mediocrity of the modern individual's character.

⁷ Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 109.

⁸ Hegel quotes with approval and analyzes at length Winckelmann's interpretation of Greek sculpture and the ideal. At the same time, he makes it clear that it belongs to the past. Winckelmann is right in saying that "ancient sculpture" has its origins in "mythological times," but "modern characters have no such self-sufficiency." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról* (Budapest: Atlantisz, 2004), 302. We might add, that no sculpture of similar magnitude is possible, either: modern character has its adequate expression in painting, music and dramatic poetry. This conclusion is confirmed by another remark: "A further point worthy of investigation would be how the universal ideal is necessarily broken, divided into particular ideal characters." (Ibid. 303) – The fact that modern characters have no such self-sufficiency as Greek characters expressing the ideal or substantial, raises further problems about the genres of modern art.

⁹ It is worth citing Gadamer's remark in this context as well: "Hegel states a definite truth, inasmuch as the essential nature of the historical spirit consists not in the restoration of the past but in thoughtful mediation with contemporary life." Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 161.

2. "INDIVIDUALIZATION" IN THE PURE AND ACTUAL WORLDS OF ETHICAL LIFE. ANTIGONE'S ENLARGEMENT BY HEGEL

We are not concerned *here and now* with Hegel's interpretation of Antigone in general, only one aspect of it, which is connected to the transformation of women's role in the modern world.¹⁰ This is discussed by Hegel in the chapter *The ethical world. Human and Divine Law. Man and Woman*. On the one hand, he emphasizes that Antigone and her world are doomed to destruction, the fall of this form of life and this tragedy of character is inevitable. On the other hand, he is still inclined to project some features of Antigone's greatness and tragedy to women's roles in later ages, and thus keep them alive. To shed light on the controversial character of Hegel's interpretation of Antigone, let us remind ourselves of the conception of ethical life in the *Phenomenology*. In this work – as opposed to the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Philosophy of Spirit*, where Hegel works with complex substantial and subjective structures – ethical life is identical to *substantial ethical life*: it refers primarily to the Greek world. This interpretation should in itself preclude all discussion of individuality based on modern actuality, as the latter implies and unfolds a new sort of ethical life: "actual ethical life" in the words of the *Phenomenology*. It is not what happens, though. Instead, Hegel highlights certain forms and manifestations of modern individuality with regard to gender roles in the passage in question. In order to explain this incoherence and inconsistency in a Hegelian sense, it is necessary to take into consideration the *sphere of concepts* that Hegel uses when *discussing the problem of individuality in the ambivalence of pure and actual (real) ethical life*.

Spirit as the center and medium of ethical life becomes twofold as ethical world (actuality) and Self (*Selbst*). The common spiritual essence is ethical substance, which is subject to a decisive change: "individualization," the becoming of individuals.¹¹ Now individual means different

¹⁰ For Derrida's Antigone interpretation – Jacques Derrida, *Glas* (Paris: Galilee, 1974) – see Gabriella Baptist and Hans-Christian Lucas, "Wem schlägt die Stunde in Derridas 'Glas'? Zu Hegelrezeption und -kritik Jacques Derridas," *Hegel-Studien*, 23 (1988): 139–180.

¹¹ Hegel remarks that individualization brings about not only loss, but enrichment as well: the individualization of substance is the "universal work" of all and each, therefore substance is a universal self. Not a dead essence, but something actual and alive – exactly as a result of individualization. P, 264.

things: first of all, singular, which should never be taken in an atomistic sense in Hegel, but is always of an intersubjective nature.¹²

Second, individual is community.¹³ For the ancients, the individual is both a nation and a personality: like Antigone and Creon, they define themselves exactly in this double sense. Hegel calls this type of individuals great personalities and great characters. On the one hand, individuation in this sense takes place at the existential level of divine law, on the other hand, at the practical-worldly, actual level of human law. The first, existential level is *pure ethical life*, which comes to being in the field of tension between existence and death, and can be illustrated by the character of the ancient Antigone. The second, practical-worldly level is *actual ethical life*, on the ground of which individualization unfolds. Thus, actual ethical life is not just a product of institutions as we see in the case of Creon and the state; it also involves the formation of individuals. This is a decisive step in the development of the subject as individual. Individualization opens a perspective that points beyond the ethical life of the ancients: the *perspective of modern individuality* in the Hegelian sense. Institutionalization, which takes place in the state represented by Creon, expresses the possibility of individuation in "actuality," while refers to its limitations as well.¹⁴ This process manifests a radical difference between the individuation of modern society and great personalities like Antigone. Creon is a transitory character: like Antigone, he is a great personality, too, who also expresses substantial power and content. Creon, however, is closely connected to human law, the state, and human institutions; therefore we could just as well call him a "citizen," as Hegel did. Creon manifests the

¹² 'I' as 'we' and 'we' as 'I' constitutes the Hegelian model of intersubjectivity in the *Phenomenology*. Cf. Michael Quante, "Der reine Begriff des Anerkennens: Überlegungen zur Grammatik der Anerkennungsrelation in Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes," in *Anerkennung*, 91–106. – Let us not forget that this Hegelian topic has been discovered by Siep for the rehabilitation of Hegel's practical philosophy (Manfred Riedel). Recognition as the Hegelian model of intersubjectivity has recently become a focus of philosophical interest. Honneth's interpretation is ruled by the social dimension, putting aside the importance of recognition for the Self. In contrast, Brandom emphasizes the significance of recognition for self-identity and self-determination. He understands recognition as a normative attitude, meaning not just responsibility for others but also authority over them. This self-relation can be a point of departure for identity-constitution mentioned above. Cf. Brandom, "Selbstbewusstsein und Selbst-Konstitution," 58–59. – For the contemporary debate on recognition as an intersubjective model, see the articles in *Anerkennung*.

¹³ In the remark to § 482 of the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel speaks of two subjects: nations and individuals.

¹⁴ Individualization now takes place in an immediate form: "Spirit is the ethical life of a nation [...] the individual that is a world." P, 265.

decreasing power of the tragical. A new trend emerges with its twofold movement: on the one hand, institutionalization goes forward and leads to the development of the “objective order” of modernity; on the other hand, individuation extends to every single individual, which is the realization of subjective freedom, the basic principle of modernity in Hegel’s conception. This twofold movement leads to the formation of the complementary, objective and subjective structures of full-fledged “actual ethical life.” These will attain their adequate shape in the *Philosophy of Right* in the structures of ethical life, above all in civil society. But *the mediocrity of character is also induced by this twofold movement – institutionalization and individuation* – which Hegel mentions already here, in his account of gender roles. According to the *Phenomenology*, women stand outside this change: fundamentally, in the depths of their existence they are not affected by the changing social-gender role of men. The conception of the *Philosophy of Right* is one step closer to the reality of modernity, when it raises the issue of conflicts between the individuals’ right to self-determination and attachment to the family, the possibility of divorce in connection with both genders.¹⁵

In the *Phenomenology*, family is grounded in the substantial-ethical world: the subjective-ethical is of less importance. Hegel links great personalities, Antigone and Creon to the ethical substance which has by now become twofold: divine and human law. These great personalities are still very far from such individuals as the citizen (*Bürger*) of modern society, or the male and female members of the institution of marriage. Nevertheless, we find interesting ideas in the *Phenomenology* about the problems of the personal identities and gender roles of men and women in those passages where Hegel deals with the topic of modern social and gender roles in the framework of actual ethical life. He speaks of the “actual” – i.e., worldly, socio-cultural – dimensions of the social and gender roles of male and female existence, which will unfold in private life separated from substantial life, as we find it in the *Philosophy of Right*. For this very reason, Hegel’s discussion of men’s and women’s conduct points beyond pure ethical life and the pure ethical values of gender roles already in the *Phenomenology* – albeit in a limited sense. In respect of character and gender roles, it brings about the linking, or a sort of *merging* of the *tragical* and the *mediocre*.

¹⁵ Cf. chapter B.II.4.

The problem of individual existence in the *Phenomenology* does not only appear in the general context of individualization and pure and actual ethical life, but *in relation of differentiating modes of practical conduct and corresponding social roles* as well. Hegel treats female and male social and gender roles in the "actual spirit" of ethical life and its conceptual medium, in a way that points beyond the pure ethical life of the ancient Antigone and her world. In *actual ethical life*, which is treated here, phenomena of a *new kind of individuation* appear, the thorough examination of which will be found in the conception of civil society in the *Philosophy of Right*. Some aspects of this new kind of individuation occur as early as 1806, foreshadowing a new ground for the interpretation of individual existence. Here, however, the ancient world and the ancient Antigone rule, and the character of the latter is projected to the phenomena of the new world, which expresses the *enlargement and metamorphosis of the ancient Antigone*.

3. THE METAMORPHOSIS OF THE ANCIENT ANTIGONE IN THE DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL AND GENDER ROLES IN MODERNITY

Hegel's modern Antigone is not identical with Kierkegaard's modern Antigone: she is not the daughter of reflected pain, in contrast to the ancient Antigone of unreflected sorrow. On the one hand, Hegel's modern Antigone is haunted by the shadow of the ancient Antigone; on the other, she loses her original, pure tragical character. How did this happen?

Hegel speaks of three aspects of woman's existence in our text, transforming them into each other. This leads to a special mixture of gender roles in Hegel's conception. He discusses female roles in the following aspects: relations between man and woman, parents and children, brother and sister. This last one can be identified either as the relation of Antigone and her brother, or Hegel and his sister, Christiane. The main feature of the relationship between brother and sister is that it is "unmixed": it has no sexual character, it is a "relation devoid of desire."¹⁶ Neither Antigone nor Hegel's sister belongs to the "relationships of mother and wife."¹⁷ In the background, however, Antigone remains the key person, who more or less determines the "mixed" interpretation of female existence and

¹⁶ Hegel speaks of an "unmixed" relationship: brother and sister "do not desire one another." – The "particularity of desire" remains alien to women, while men acquire "the right of desire." P, 274–275.

¹⁷ P, 274.

female gender roles. Distancing the “particularity of desire” from woman and defining it as alien to woman suggests that the ancient Antigone still dominates this picture of woman. In the background of the prosaic and mediocre female role belonging to worldly, actual ethical life, the shadow of Antigone keeps hiding in all her tragical greatness. Hegel thus asserts the values represented by Antigone by extending them to women’s role in the modern world, while he also emphasizes the necessary fall of Antigone’s world. Hegel knows that Antigone cannot be rescued; because of her purity, she cannot be transposed to the new role, of which Hegel says: “Since, then, in this relationship of the wife there is an admixture of particularity, her ethical life is not pure.”¹⁸ He still mixes her in this gender role of impure ethical life.

In respect of content, we naturally face the customary picture of gender roles in Hegel’s time, especially of women’s social-gender role, the primary cultural-historical background of which remains Christianity even in post-Enlightenment, secularizing Europe. In accordance with this picture, Hegel attributed only to men the possibility and challenge of entering *actual ethical life*, which can be understood as the *early shape of civil society*, the center of the *Philosophy of Right*. He points this out when he describes community:

The community may, on the one hand, organize itself into systems of personal independence and property, of laws relating to persons and things; and, on the other hand, the various ways of working for ends which are in the first instance particular ends – those of gain and enjoyment – it may articulate into their own special and independent associations.¹⁹

It is man – whose role is dominated by the brother in this passage, which is also quite remarkable – who enters the worldly medium and exerts different activities there. This community-based world at the same time starts to change into an actuality of individuation, which takes place through *particularization*, and is determined in opposition to the purity of ethical life and its universality.

The multiply ambiguous behavior of the modern individual in the worldly sphere, in *actual ethical life as the precursor of civil society* is demonstrated by Hegel with the example of man, who is at the same time the appropriate shape of *personal self*. This personal self is the one in whom spirit becomes individuality, and who – facing other individualities –

¹⁸ P, 275.

¹⁹ P, 272.

passes over to the consciousness of universality. As a result of individuation, man leaves the immediate, elementary, therefore negative ethical life, in order to gain and develop his *own, self-conscious, actual ethical life*.²⁰ Woman has to stick to her role which has been prescribed for her by pure, non-actual ethical life, even though Hegel knows exactly that this requirement is absurd. Woman remains the guardian of the "law of the family," who, however, finds herself in different circumstances having the features of mediocrity: the "family nest" can hardly live up to the loftiness of the former law of the family. Women's role can no longer be identified with the destiny of the ancient Antigone, or even with the peculiar role of Hegel's sister. Hegel's point of view is hardly explainable with historical circumstances only. There is a theoretical inconsistency in the discussion of the social meanings of female existence, in the duty of sustaining pure ethical life addressed solely to women.

The contradiction in Hegel's ideas is clearly visible in the case of *love*. It also reveals an essential conceptional difference between *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right*. In *Phenomenology*, we read:

In the first place, because the ethical principle is intrinsically universal, the ethical connection between the members of the Family is *not that of feeling, or the relationship of love*. [emphasis mine, E.R.]. It seems, then, that the ethical principle must be placed in the relation of the individual member of the Family to the whole Family as the Substance.²¹

The 1806 text says that the basic feature of the family – in contrast to the 1820 conception of the *Philosophy of Right* – is that it cannot be based on love. Love as an ethical disposition cannot be identified with romantic love, neither now nor later. This, in Hegel's view, has its origins in the extremes of modern subjective freedom, therefore cannot be regarded as a valid intersubjective form in ethically grounded relations. Romantic love as an extreme form of individuation is dependent on accidental and arbitrary elements, thereby threatening family as an ethical community. This threat is illustrated by Hegel with the example on man. The threat to ethical community, to the family is expressed in desires and feelings, which bring arbitrariness and contingency to the community of the family. Hegel, however, approves without further ado all sensuality and desire in the case of man, while denying them of women. Man can acquire the

²⁰ P, 268–269.

²¹ P, 268–269.

“right of desire,” while the same would destroy the woman’s purity of ethical life. Women’s role is described as follows:

The relationships of mother and wife, however, are those of particular individuals, partly in the form of something natural pertaining to desire, partly in the form of something negative which sees in those relationships only something evanescent and also – again – the particular individual is for that very reason a contingent element which can be replaced by another individual. In the ethical household, it is not a question of *this* particular husband, *this* particular child, but simply of husband and children generally; the relationships of the woman are based, not on feeling, but on the universal. The difference between the ethical life of the woman and that of the man consists just in this, that in her vocation as an individual and in her pleasure, her interest is centred on the universal and remains alien to the particularity of desire, whereas in the husband these two sides are separated; and since he possesses as a citizen the self-conscious power of universality, he thereby acquires the right of desire and, at the same time, preserves his freedom in regard to it. Since, then, in this relationship of the wife there is an admixture of particularity, her ethical life is not pure; but in so far as it is ethical, the particularity is a matter of indifference, and the wife is without the moment of knowing herself as *this* particular self in the other partner.²²

The ethical action and attitude of woman must remain immediately substantial, i.e., stable and unwavering: the particular, contingent, arbitrary and fragmentary mode of individuality is ruled out in the case of woman, for it would risk the purity of her ethical life. Woman’s individuality thereby gets a character which can relate solely to the *whole and the universal*. However, a requirement devoid of any particularity – including the “right of desire” – can only be fulfilled by such great personalities as Antigone. Hegel knows that great personalities are exceptions: their life and fate is tied to the pure realm of ethical law, and belonging to a purely existential ethical life of existence and death, they are necessarily tragic characters, doomed to destruction.

In the enlargement and extension of Antigone’s character, we recognize a sort of warning and protective function of philosophy, deriving from the insight that the substantial world of pure ethical life has become endangered. Substantial world cannot permanently avoid the influence of individuation that takes place in worldly ethical life, in the everyday, particular lifeworld of the differentiating practices of modernity: this individuation in turn becomes more and more extensive and thereby

²² P, 274–275.

mediocre.²³ In Hegel's view, however, this change has different effects on men and women. Men can handle these changes without threatening their own ethical life. By contrast, women can only choose the way of individuation by risking the purity of their ethical life.

The fall of pure ethical life is not foreshadowed by woman's individuation only. Hegel also observed this process in the *mixed characters of great personalities and mediocre ones*. It was obvious for him, that great personalities can no longer serve as models for the practical attitudes and daily practices of individuals in the "prosaic world," or actual ethical life of modernity. He still requires the impossible, but only of women: the life conduct of women must be directed and determined by the preservation and practice of pure ethical life. It is a *superhuman requirement*. At the same time, he sees that, as we proceed from pure ethical life to worldly, actual ethical life, the "law of the family," in the shape of guarding the "family nest," drags down the tragic (and the poetic) to a prosaic and gray world. The new kind of ethical life contains a number of *everyday, prosaic, trite tasks and duties*, which start to *take possession of woman's lifeworld*. That is how the "enlargement" of woman inspired by Antigone becomes *idealization*, which – confronted with actual lifeworld and daily routine – becomes *increasingly distant and alien: in the end, it proves to be defunct*. Hegel will consider this in the ethical theory of the *Philosophy of Right*, discussing the roles of the genders.

Hegel's *realism* in the *Phenomenology* is represented by the example of man with whom he deals in the relations of individuation and actual ethical life. *In the case of man*, he in fact describes the redistribution of gender roles in the rearranged modern ethical world with a great sense of reality. In this context, he shows how the radical change in ethical life has led to the reinterpretation of man's status and role. Through his practical activities, man as "singular" *leaves the pure ethical ground of the family*. His practical activities bring forward desires and needs, which, as practical motivations, through their particularity, enter into an ambiguous relationship with pure ethical and universal-substantial contents. "Power" and "wealth" is not the territory of pure ethical life, but of actual: it belongs to man's competence, who reacts to this new situation in a twofold way.

²³ Pöggeler's remark on the task of philosophy remains valid in this context, too: "By questioning, philosophy must attempt to preserve the opportunity of what has been experienced by a human being once." Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 105.

The acquisition and maintenance of power and wealth is in part concerned only with needs and belongs to the sphere of appetite; in part, they become in their higher determination something that is only mediated. This determination does not fall within the Family itself, but bears on what is truly universal, the community; it has, rather, a negative relation to the Family, and consists in expelling the individual from the Family, subduing the natural aspect and separateness of his existence, and training him to be virtuous, to a life in and for the universal.²⁴

The destination of man points beyond the family: his civil profession and his civil-communal duties lead him out of the narrow world of the "family nest." Man's sphere of action cannot be compared to the lifeworld of the woman, of whom he has the highest requirements in the *Phenomenology*, in sharp contrast to the novel, civic, prosaic role of man.

The preservation of woman's pure ethical life is not only ensured by the fact that she is deprived of the right of desire. In this context, Hegel makes the following telling remarks: the meaning of a woman's life is based not on feeling, but on the universal as "absolute duty." She finds her task and vocation in the "ethical household," where not *this* man or *this* child bears significance for her, but *man and child in general*. These relationships of the woman are not based on feeling or disposition, but on a universal norm and requirement. In contrast to man, pleasure and desire remain alien to woman. Hegel does not provide woman with desire and pleasure; she can only feel some emotional touch as a mother. What is more, the essence of the feminine is the lack of consciousness: it is rather an intuitive awareness, an inner feeling.²⁵ In contrast, man as citizen possesses the self-conscious force of universality, whereby he can acquire the "right of desire." Through the right of desire, sensuality and emotions only belong to man as components of individuation, and by no means to woman. A further defect of woman is that she lacks the capability of knowing herself in the other. Hegel thus deprives woman of the richness which is potentially hidden in the intersubjective nature of human existence, while requiring of her a superhuman attitude, pure ethical life. The gender role of woman is filled with contradictions that Hegel does not even try to solve: his statements in the *Phenomenology* remain saturated with inconsistencies.

The irrelevance of Antigone becomes even more obvious, if we take a look at the function of the model for social conduct. All individuals need models, as traditional norms and orientations no longer help them in the usual way. Orientation, however, is always necessary as: "vacillating atti-

²⁴ P, 269.

²⁵ P, 274–275.

tude" has become typical of the practical attitudes of modernity, which Hegel tackles already in the *Phenomenology*.²⁶ This is one of the reasons why self-interpretation and self-determination have a much greater significance in modernity than in the "old world." Antigone, however, does not and cannot know this kind of self-interpretation and self-determination. She identifies herself immediately with divine law: this is her essence, existence, and lifeworld at the same time.²⁷ Disposition is the only element which expresses self-reflection and distancing from herself, although in a rudimentary form. This is the context in which Hegel cites Sophocles: "Because we suffer we acknowledge we have erred."²⁸ This disposition, however, is not a component of a mature, differentiated self-interpretation: the disposition of Antigone does not show the structured character and dynamics which would be indispensable for becoming a model of self-interpretation and self-determination in the modern world. On the contrary, this disposition is monolithically substantial and remains so. As such, it is one of the concluding elements of ancient tragedy. As an inarticulate and static component of the existential essence of pure ethical life, a disposition like this cannot become a subjective element reshaping the ethical life of feminine existence: an inarticulate and unmoving disposition cannot have an effect on the further development of the Self.²⁹ That is why love as a subjective-substantial disposition is necessarily left out of the *Phenomenology*, but becomes an important element of self-development in the *Philosophy of Right*.

4. BEYOND ANTIGONE

In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel elaborates the conception of modern ethical life, including the modern family. The problem of novel gender

²⁶ "Vacillating attitude" is best illustrated by some examples of practical conduct in the *Phenomenology*. Pleasure-oriented behavior or the conduct of the *bel esprit* belong here. Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, "Verhaltensweisen des Individuums der 'Lust,' des Individuums des 'Gesetzes des Herzens' und des 'tugendhaften Ritters,'" in Rózsa, *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*, 44–71.

²⁷ The topic of self-interpretation and self-determination is systematically treated in the *Philosophy of Right* where self-determination is the center of morality.

²⁸ P, 284.

²⁹ The disposition of the modern subject has got a special emphasis in the philosophy of Kierkegaard. See his treatment of the basic difference between the self-reflection of the ancient and the modern Antigone, the break between sorrow and pain, the essential distinction between reflected and un-reflected conduct. See Sören Kierkegaard, "The tragic in ancient drama reflected in the tragic in modern drama" in *Either/or* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 137–164.

roles does not occur here sporadically, as in the *Phenomenology*, but emphatically in accordance with the twofold movement of modernity: institutionalization and individuation.³⁰ A new element in 1820 is, that woman can no longer evade the consequences of individuation and its contingent consequences. Love as the “subjective” principle of modern family and as an “ethical,” i.e., educational institutional element gets a strong systematical status, in accordance with the modern principle of subjective freedom. This duality of love, its character as a subjective-ethical disposition becomes an indispensable pre-condition and component of the now separated private life, which would have been unthinkable in the *Phenomenology*. In this context, Hegel distinguishes between two types of disposition, relating them to particularity. One is linked with accidentence in the negative sense: arbitrariness and contingency, which Hegel brought forth in the *Phenomenology*. The other type of disposition takes into itself the universal-ethical as content, and retains it in the inwardness of subjective disposition. This disposition becomes a particular “inner world,” the proper actuality of every single individual’s subjective freedom. Here we can see again why *particularity is the appropriate logical form of the individual’s self-interpretation and self-determination*.³¹ It has not been so in the *Phenomenology*. This particularity, however, is not only a logical formation: as a concept of spirit and specifically of *practical philosophy*, it expresses a stabilizing function in the lifeworld, and a consolidating role in the individuals’ life conduct.³² In contrast to the state of being in love, it is “self-conscious love” which exemplifies in the *Philosophy of Right* the

³⁰ For a recent comparison of the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right*, see Michael Quante, “Die Vernunft unvernünftig aufgefasst: Hegels Kritik der beobachtenden Vernunft,” in *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes: Ein kooperativer Kommentar zum einem Schlüsselwerk der Moderne*, ed. Klaus Vieweg and Wolfgang Welsch (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2008), 325–349; and Ludwig Siep, “Moralischer und sittlicher Geist in Hegels Phänomenologie,” *ibid.* 415–438.

³¹ Cf. chapter B.I.

³² Hegel uses the conceptual constellation of universal, particular, and individual as early as 1809, i.e., shortly after the publication of the *Phenomenology*. The particular which had an explicit negative connotation in the *Phenomenology*, now becomes an internal element in the doctrine of concept, resulting in a new, threefold conceptual constellation. This development has consequences for practical philosophy as well. In the Nuremberg writings, Hegel treats the particularity of individuals with reference to universality and freedom in the framework of “practical consciousness.” Particularity thereby transcends its meaning as a logical formation: the involvement of the concept of freedom adds a practical philosophical sense to it. Cf. Hegel, *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften*, especially 22, 29–32, 70–73, 139–141, and 224.

difference between the two kinds of particularity and the stabilizing function in the medium of disposition.

This love is neither pure feeling, nor pure ethical life: it is a constellation including *feelings, emotions, and the sensual*. Being practical and intersubjective, *responsibility and solidarity* also become its features. In the world of the actual ethical life of modern civil existence, it constitutes a substantial, and at the same time subjective disposition, which is now everyone's due, even women's. Women now have the "right of desire": mutual relationship in love presupposes mutual physical attraction, although its realization is only desirable after the wedding, as Hegel suggests. The upbringing of children is an eminent educational task assigned to women, which gives them a higher status in society. The most important change seems to be that women also have the "right to particularity" and the right of self-determination as the basic rights of modern individuation, which is apparent in the decision about marriage. This decision can only be made by the two autonomous individuals involved, and not their parents.³³ This sort of decision was anything but obvious in Hegel's time. The emphasis on the significance of own decision on the one hand, and on the ethical responsibility of the partners on the other served to stabilize family as a form of living together when circumstances are no longer stable. Let us think of the theory of civil society, where instability was Hegel's main concern. Basically, Hegel opposed divorce. However, the right to particularity and self-determination, and their extension to women explains why Hegel brought up the topic of divorce as early as the second paragraph of the chapter on family, while he was first and foremost an advocate of the stability of the family and marriage.³⁴

In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel demonstrates individuation, a basic direction of modernity, and its far-reaching consequences by the example of man, in the spirit of his time. These consequences start with the rise of individual autonomy, which leads to disturbances in the forms of coexistence, or even to the dissolution of these forms. Hegel held that the dissolution of the family was possible not in a natural way only – in this regard, he was a critic of patriarchal societies. Dissolution does not only take place because children grow up or parents die: there are also new kinds of factors leading to the dissolution of the family. The changes

³³ The "free consent of the persons" is the basis of modern marriage. R, 201 (§ 162).

³⁴ On the natural dissolution of marriage see R, 200 (§ 159); on the question of divorce, see R, 214 (§ 178).

in feeling and disposition, the possibility of which is inherent in the preferred right of particularity, made him understand that the *possibility of divorce is "structurally" encoded in modern family*.

§ 176 of the *Philosophy of Right* and the manuscript notes belonging to it can shed more light on this insight. Here, contingency is not taken in the usual negative sense; it is a structural element of modern marriage.³⁵ The conception of ethical idea has become more complex: its "actuality" includes the inwardness of subjective disposition and feeling. The contingency and arbitrariness of motivations and actions are legitimized by every individual's right to particularity, which is explained by individuals' subjective freedom as the basic principle of the modern world.³⁶ The contingent and the arbitrary become components of a complementary structure, that has the ethical idea of marriage and family as *institutionalized actuality* and the *subjective disposition and inner world* of the individuals as its two poles. This basic structure affects the forms of living together, such as marriage and family, which no longer operate as merely ethical-substantial institutions and units; they also constitute a field of action – and limitation – for individuals who possess personal freedom and right to particularity.

Hegel did not preclude the possibility of divorce, he was not a misogynist, and was not an unconditional supporter of patriarchal society. His sensitivity to the first signs of some new developments of modernity in the *Phenomenology*, and to the more and more differentiated, colliding structures of modern society in the *Philosophy of Right* make his views attractive even now. Pure ethical life is a formation that is doomed to

³⁵ As § 176 of the *Philosophy of Right* says: "Marriage is still only the immediate [form of the] ethical Idea and thus has its objective actuality in the inwardness of subjective disposition and feeling. This accounts for the basic contingency of its existence. Just as there can be no compulsion to marry, so also can there be no merely legal or positive bond which could keep the partners together once their dispositions and actions have become antagonistic and hostile. A third ethical authority is, however, required in order to uphold the right of marriage – i.e. of ethical substantiality – against the mere opinion that a hostile disposition is present, and against the contingency of merely transient moods, etc., to distinguish these from total estrangement, and to make sure that the partners are totally estranged before *divorce* is granted." R, 213. The manuscript notes to the *Philosophy of Right* distinguish between three forms of the dissolution of the family: children becoming adults, the natural death of the parents, and the contingency of disposition. The latter reflects Hegel's worry that modern family can be dissolved solely by the right of particularity which may be stronger than the ethical cohesion of the family. The particularity of disposition can change at any time: if it leads to hostility or complete alienation, divorce must be granted. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, 329.

³⁶ Cf. chapter A.I. 3.

failure, as Antigone herself already in the *Phenomenology*. The “beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium” of ethical spirit is necessarily destroyed. Spirit takes on another shape, passes over to legal state, where the Self determines itself as the formal universality of individuality. “The universal being thus split up into a mere multiplicity of individuals, this lifeless Spirit is an equality, in which all count the same, i.e., as persons.”³⁷ In this formation, the world of Roman law, the concept of individuality refers to the concept of many. *One* and *many*, however, is not an appropriate conceptual constellation for either the great personalities of the former ethical formation, or the later forms of individuation. The basic structure corresponding to later individuation, which structure manifests itself in the right to particularity, in the logical-conceptual constellations of universality, particularity, and individuality, content and form, and in the basic principle of practical reason, is found in a fully-developed, systematic form in the 1820 *Philosophy of Right*.

Hegel's tone here is no longer dramatic or poetic, but rather *resigned*. By 1820, Antigone becomes irrelevant: purely tragic ethical life, contact with the pure forms of existence and death cannot be a valid model in the prosaic world of modernity. Hegel's questions about the meeting of these two worlds remain relevant in a hermeneutical and meaning constituting way, though: they remain valid even if one no longer shares his viewpoint of 1806. The ethical purity of Antigone cannot be a model for us – the mature Hegel knew this well. Not long after his Jena years, he poses the question how *tragedy vanishes from the modern world, and is superseded more and more by mediocrity*. From the Nuremberg years on, we see many signs of this conceptional turn. Nevertheless, the pure ethical life of Antigone, still has its traces in Hegel's questions and perhaps in ours as well.

For the modern human being, the search for ethical values is no more a question of life and death. It is not about the tragedy of human existence, but *rectitude and honesty*, i.e., *mediocre value-orientations* which are characteristic of the behavior and conduct of the individual who has become citizen. Civil existence involves living in marriage and family. One *function* of the family is to preserve, demonstrate and hand down rectitude and honesty as core civil virtues. In this new kind of lifeworld, men and women acquire rights, and obtain a sphere of action for their practical activities, but *without the solemnity of the ancient*. Anyone can be an *honest citizen* without solemnly bury the dead, or having a poetic feeling of

³⁷ P, 290.

love. Love is presupposed in the modern world not as individual romantic love or sensual attraction, but as a subjective substantial ethical disposition, the primary *function* of which is to strengthen the institutional framework of structurally unstable private life (marriage and family) and to consolidate the self-interpretation and self-determination of similarly unstable individuals. Stable, consolidated private life is one of the basic values of modern civil world. It is one reason why divorce cannot be an *explicit* structural element of marriage in the Hegelian conception. *Implicitly*, however, Hegel acknowledges the structural causes and the possibility of divorce in the modern world.

Hegel's idea of the family and gender roles belongs to the passing formations of history. However, through his discussion of modern private life and its tensions or individual existence and its ambiguities he remains up-to-date. We, too, struggle with these contrary "principles": the ethical-communal character of our forms of coexistence, our duties and responsibilities on one side, and the burden of our separation, the result of our right to particularity on the other; i.e., the conflict of these principles and rights. The mixing of the ancient Antigone with the modern is a stage in Hegel's development which – in spite of its theoretical difficulties – inspired such authors as Kierkegaard, and still motivates us to rediscover the liveliness of his thought.

CHAPTER EIGHT

TYPES OF INDIVIDUALITY IN MODERN (ROMANTIC) ART: CHRIST, THE KNIGHT, THE HONEST CITIZEN, AND THE COMEDIAN

... the craving to be something *special* [...] only in the *exceptional* does it attain consciousness of its distinctiveness.¹

... the romantic principle [...] the infinity of subjectivity [...] here does the subject place its infinite personality [...] reflection places the whole personality into this particular.²

From now on, the sphere of art embraces all prosaic objects, the whole of everyday, contingent objectivity and subjectivity [...] The end of romantic art is thereby marked by humor [...] the object is not adequate to the inwardness of the soul.³

1. THE SOCIO-CULTURAL EMBEDDEDNESS OF ART AND THE QUESTION OF INDIVIDUALITY IN THE RELATIONS OF OBJECTIVE AND ABSOLUTE SPIRIT

Hegel's thesis on the subject's subjection to ethical life is more than irritating: the ethical sphere belongs to the objective; its moments are the ethical powers which govern the lives of individuals; these powers have their representation, phenomenal shape, and actuality in individuals as "accidents" – this is the short summary of the contested thesis in § 145 of the *Philosophy of Right*.⁴ This statement still has its effect on the picture of Hegel: it seems sufficient to quote Frank's "de-individualization" ("Entindividualisierung"), or Honneth's "over-institutionalization" ("Überinstitutionalisierung") with respect to Hegel.⁵

¹ R, 193 (§ 150).

² Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 244.

³ Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 251.

⁴ R, 190 (§ 145).

⁵ Frank, "Subjektivität und Intersubjektivität," 458; Honneth, *Leiden an Unbestimmtheit*,

Before however accepting too hastily this indisputably irritating declaration, it is worth questioning what Hegel actually declares. Ethical life, in whose framework we find this infamous proposition about individuals being accidental, is the system of the institutions of modern society in a broad sense. This objective system of political, legal, social, and economic institutions, norms, customs, and laws has predominance over individuals. We should not forget however, that the Hegelian principle of modernity, unfolded systematically exactly in the *Philosophy of Right*, is “infinite free subjectivity.” In this mature conception which will serve as the theoretical-systematic foundation of the philosophy of art, the basic structure of modernity consists in the *complementary relations* of the institutionalized forms of society and the own worlds of free, self-determinant individuals (inner world, lifeworld).

After the objective spirit, self-determination/self-disposal as a “right” determining the attitude of the modern human being will play a distinguished role in the forms of the absolute spirit, e.g., in modern, romantic art as well. Hegel’s theory of romantic art cannot be separated from the mentioned complementary relations, the dual structure of socio-cultural embeddedness and individual character. His (in)famous thesis about the end of art can be understood properly if we take note of these structures and features.

What do we mean by that?

Of course, art does *not* focus on the institutional aspects of ethical life, although the normative contents of ethical life are indispensable for the artist, the works, and the audience as well.⁶ However, what is really interesting for art is the particular life of individuals. The structural elements, institutions and laws of the objective spirit hide rather than reveal these. What happens in the inner world and private lifeworld of the individuals is irrelevant for the institutional order based on the “right of objectivity.”⁷ The spheres of law, property, civil society, and the state relate to actuality in its objectivity only. What individuals feel, the emotions and considerations that inform their decisions and actions are of no concern for these institutions. Individuals make decisions and act, but how they come to

⁶ Some fundamental ideas of this chapter were elaborated in 1998, relying on Hegel’s *Aesthetics*. The publication of the authentic version of the lectures on the philosophy of art modified my approach only in so far as I now use those concepts, ideas and arguments of the *Aesthetics* which are contained in Hegel’s lecture notes, or at least do not contradict them.

⁷ Cf. chapter A.I.5.

decisions and what follows from their actions for their inner, personal life, is almost completely irrelevant from the viewpoint of the institutions of the objective spirit. What does have relevance are decisions and actions, these are rational and – as a result of intersubjective cooperative moments – have an effect on the structures of the objective order. The motivational structure described in *The System of Needs* is such a rational, intersubjective sphere. It is exactly in these relations that the individual becomes an “accident” whose doubts, dilemmas and despair, emotions regarding decisions and actions, in other words, those aspects of one’s life that seem subjective and contingent from the outside, but are actual and important for oneself remain mostly hidden, because they are deemed insignificant.⁸ In contrast, this territory is extremely important for art. “*Actual subjectivity*,” constituted of these components is the main concern of art: subjectivity in its own, self-shaped worlds, personal existence, inner world, particular lifeworld. This “subjective” sphere of actuality will be the material and object of works of art.

On the one hand, art has to do with subjective inner world concentrated in feeling, on the other, with the “immediacy of life,” as objective circumstance to be left behind later. Feeling as inner world and the immediacy of life constitute the basic structure and conceptual constellation which is the basis of art. We can see under this perspective that the medium of art necessarily takes the subject as its center. It is especially true of romantic art, in which *subjectivity is not just the formal side, but also the content of art*. This content requires an appropriate (artistic) *portrayal*: “For in the inner as such, in pure thought, in the world of laws and their universality man cannot hold out; he needs also sensuous existence, feeling, the heart, emotion, etc.”⁹ The history of art, especially that of romantic art is witness to the eminent status of subjectivity as both form and content. We can

⁸ The young Hegel sharply criticizes the excessive power of institutions over individuals, especially the power of religious institutions, dogmas, and the church in general. The basic concept of this critique is positivity. The mature Hegel is also concerned about the overpower of laws and institutions. The analysis of the objective order, the institutional world of modernity shows that it has a tendency to increase divisions in the social and political sphere: let us think of the growing opposition between wealth and poverty, luxury and rabble mentality, or the modern phenomena of political terror and religious fanaticism which are all treated in the *Philosophy of Right*. Under such circumstances, the primary task of social institutions is to keep extremes between the boundaries of legal and ethical order, and protect the lifeworld of the individuals. At the same time, the balanced operation of modern society relies heavily on the self-protection of individuals as well, and their culture of freedom. See also chapter B.III.

⁹ A I, 97–98.

understand now, why the last shape of modern art, comedy has “absolute subjectivity” as its protagonist.

Hegel distinguishes between two shapes of subjectivity: “actual subjectivity” and “absolute subjectivity.” *Human* or *actual subjectivity* refers to the fact that this actuality is no longer identical with immediate existence, while it is not something beyond the human being, either. It is not before or after the human being and everything that is human; it has to be *in* it, it is *its* actuality.¹⁰ Subjectivity is also potentially absolute subjectivity, primarily in thinking; the form of this subjectivity is the *concept*, its medium is philosophy. Another version of absolute subjectivity is found in art, in the world of comedy, irony and humor. These two, apparently distant formations of subjectivity constitute the common base of our self-shaped worlds in the “*principle of inwardness*.” In art, this principle refers to the change which takes place in romantic art, where absolute subjectivity becomes the central topic of art founding its own end in itself. What is more, it becomes a special attitude, in the shape of comedy and irony.

Nevertheless, the adequate genre of modern art is not comedy: it is the genre already foreshadowing the end. The genres belonging to the prime of modern art are *dramatic poetry* and, in part, the worldly sphere of *painting*. *Gemüt* is the subjective cognitive and dispositional form in which the components of the inwardness principle explicated into “inner world” become structured.¹¹ In this context does inwardness – with the worlds and subjectivity-shapes based on it – become not only the object of modern art, but also its basic motive.¹²

¹⁰ The first, immediate actuality of “actual subjectivity” is in the lifeworld. In modernity, everyone has the right to one’s own lifeworld. “Every man has to make his way through life for himself and to gain and maintain an actual position for himself.” A I, 568 – The importance of one’s own lifeworld is also stressed in the 1823 lectures: “To the subject there belongs a surrounding world, just as God has a temple.” (Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 156.)

¹¹ For the Hegelian motive of inwardness as a component of modern identity, see Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.

¹² For the connection between the principle of inwardness and the prose of modern life in the medium of art, see Erzsébet Rózsa, “Hegel über die Kunst der ‘neueren Zeit’ im Spannungsfeld zwischen der ‘Prosa’ und der ‘Innerlichkeit,’” in *Die Geschichtliche Bedeutung der Kunst und die Bestimmung der Künste*, ed. Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert and Lu de Vos (München: Fink, 2005), 121–144.

2. COLLISIONS BETWEEN THE NEED FOR ABSOLUTE AND THE PROSE OF MODERN WORLD IN THE MEDIUM OF ART

The principle of modern art is inwardness, which is rooted in "infinite free subjectivity," the principle of modernity as an historical era. Hegel's discussion is tightly connected to the modern individual's "rights" to self-consciousness, knowledge, feeling, will, and action.¹³ The principle of subjective freedom and these rights is everyone's due. When it comes to modern liberties, Hegel is just as dedicated to empirical universality as Kant. In Hegel, however, the turn that he highlights in the case of the *function of art*, originates in the historical idea of "everybody's freedom."¹⁴ The artistic portrayal of those individual human worlds which manifest themselves in passions, actions, characters, the vices and virtues of the persons do *not* have an artistic value only. Hegel also attributes a *cultural task* to art in modern society. The inner worlds and lifeworlds of individuals are filled with passions, doubts, conflicts and alternatives, whose artistic portrayal has normative elements, in which we recognize the need for models of conduct.

These models, portrayed in the medium of art become parts of the training/education process the realization of which Hegel calls "education for freedom" ("Bildung zur Freiheit") and deems it desirable in every individual's life. The cultural function represented by this formula refers to the fact that in modernity, subjective freedom as "idea," "principle," and "value" is not simply given, but given as a task: every single human being has to learn and practice freedom which can only thereby "correspond to its concept." In Hegel's view, the incorporation of the idea and rights of freedom into the *practical attitudes and practices* of individuals is *an essential condition of the rational, balanced operation of modern societies*. Art has an important *socio-cultural* task in this respect.

Art faces the brutal experience of modern world's "all-round finitude," which Hegel calls the "prose of life" or the "prose of the world." It creates new circumstances for art, philosophy, or – as we have seen – religion as well.¹⁵ The forms of absolute spirit reflect this novel situation in their

¹³ R, 151–152 (§ 124).

¹⁴ The role of art in history is the focus of Gethmann-Seifert's interpretation of Hegel. Cf. Annemarie Gethmann-Seifert, *Die Funktion der Kunst in der Geschichte: Untersuchungen zu Hegels Ästhetik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1984) Her emphasis is on Schiller's dramas; see especially 159–163.

¹⁵ Cf. chapter C.I.

own way. They thematize the frequent and painful collisions of human existence and knowledge as a fundamental tension between the *modern experience of "all-round finitude"* and the *eternal metaphysical need* for the absolute as infinite, and at the same time for subjective *certainty*. This need – no matter how elementary it is – cannot be torn out of the bonds and limits of the world of "all-round finitude." And vice versa: the modern experience of "all-round finitude" leads to the desire to break out of this sphere, to the need for the absolute:

What man seeks in this situation, ensnared here as he is in finitude on every side, is the region of a higher, more substantial, truth, in which all oppositions and contradictions in the finite can find their final resolution, and freedom its full satisfaction.¹⁶

Metaphysical need thus includes the *desire* of absolute, *infinite freedom* as well: *infinite subjectivity as certainty of oneself*.

All this reveals a new kind of tension in modernity, which is no longer a question directly about God, which linked metaphysics to the traditional topic of arguments about God. Hegel's concern is not this traditional metaphysics, but a sort of anthropological constant, the need oriented towards the infinite, which cannot be eliminated from human existence, and affects it in a different way than before.¹⁷ This elementary need transcends the cultural dimension and function of art: the cultural function of art, training/education for freedom cannot be of help in satisfying our need for the infinite (infinite freedom) from this point on.¹⁸

Hegel does not thereby ease modern individuals: on the contrary, he burdens them with the need for the infinite – albeit not in the traditional, metaphysical sense, but in a peculiar new way. The young Hegel has already tackled this need, as we have seen in the mention of Pascal and the "God is dead" thesis in *Faith and Knowledge*. The mature Hegel comes to the conclusion that in the last analysis the fulfillment of this need becomes the issue of every individual's own subjective decision. The metaphor of "faith in feeling" expresses this version of the modern individual's religiosity offered by Hegel, although not in an empirically universal way.¹⁹

¹⁶ A I, 99.

¹⁷ Cf. chapter A.I.2.

¹⁸ This need is existential and metaphysical in nature. As Henrich states: in the sense of an existential analysis of conscious life, and as a foundation of metaphysics by a theory of subjectivity. Both meanings serve as an explanation for speculative thought, and lead back to a theory of subjectivity and "life-analysis." Henrich, *Bewußtes Leben*, 9.

¹⁹ On this topic, see chapter C.1.

This development derives from the principle of “infinite subjective freedom,” which principle extends to every individual in modernity as a normative system of rights. I have already discussed its negative effects on individuals and their lifeworlds in detail.²⁰ Now, I only refer to the fact that the Hegelian interpretation of these developments calls into question the future of art, and explores the *problematic character* of the relation between modern human being and the Absolute/God, as well as of the cultural forms expressing this relation.

The fact that the metaphysical need for God does not disappear from modernity after the enlightenment has consequences for human existence in general, and also for the life conduct of individuals. These consequences are different in the various ages of modern art and culture. At the beginning of the modern age, which Hegel links to the person and story of Christ, the Roman Empire and Roman law, finite being has the task to leave or even destroy, “kill” the immediacy and finitude of one’s life as nothingness (Nichtigkeitkeit).²¹ The essence of Christ’s story is the “infinite pain” of sacrificing one’s own subjectivity. At the same time, this “infinite pain” becomes a basic constituent of the “essence of spirit,” i.e., freedom.²²

The availability of the absolute is thus connected to Christ’s story: it belongs to its core. The role of Christ as an empirically universal model can be attached to this story: Hegel has already raised this issue as a student in Tübingen.²³ This sort of death is not only passing away and destruction, but also a liberation from finitude: an infinite affirmation of life and a repetition of the exemplary story.²⁴ However, this form of contact with infinity and the absolute offers a narrow content for artistic portrayal. Hegel points this out in his treatment of the religious sphere of art.²⁵

²⁰ Cf. chapter B.I.

²¹ A I, 522–523.

²² S, § 382.

²³ “Model” (Muster) and “conduct” (Verhalten) are terms used by Hegel in his 1793 Tübingen sermon, to describe the practical pattern of reconciliation. Cf. Johannes Hoffmeister, *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung* (Stuttgart: Frommanns 1936), 189.

²⁴ “A further subject matter is the repetition of the passion and its portrayal in other individuals.” (Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 240) The conversion of the sinner is an “eternal story”: pain and conversion both belong to the inner. (Ibid., 242.)

²⁵ The harmony of content and form is dissolved in the religious sphere of romantic art: appearance and inwardness become separated. It is not easy to “find the medium fitted to the shape” in the story of Christ’s passion. (Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 238.) The repetition of the passion in the martyrs is also difficult to portray in art. They recapitulate the conversion of the sinner, the eternal story in themselves. “Meaning here is a believing, desiring soul, an infinite totality.” What appears, is an external, often “disgusting

In contrast, the worldly, human sphere of art is rich in phenomena, and provides art with a variety of objects and contents, although here we find ourselves in the world of “all-round finitude.” The discussion makes it clear that the mature Hegel finds the model of Christ somewhat limited in regard of modern individuals’ life conduct and of artistic interest.

Individuals act in a finite world, which is at the same time permeated with the “idea” of subjective freedom in all of its fields, including art.²⁶ The idea of freedom unfolds itself in the finite, contingent, and fragmentary life of individuals, which Hegel calls not only finitude, but “particularity” and the “prose of life.” The experience and expansion of this life, however, does not exempt us from facing the question of the absolute, even if some people like Pascal – whom Hegel refers to several times – or later Nietzsche predicted the death of God.²⁷ Hegel was aware of the phenomena which led other philosophers to the ‘God is dead’ thesis. He, however, preferred another alternative, emphasizing that the need for God is deeply rooted in human existence and can never be expelled from it. The challenge posed by human existence is all the more difficult for modern individuals, as they experience “all-round finitude” in their everyday life, and even count with the death of God; however, they cannot get rid of the elementary need for God, despite all of their insight and experience.

This existential metaphysical need, which is built deeply into human existence on the one hand, and extreme finitude as the prose of the modern world on the other create an extraordinary tension in modern human existence. This elementary tension has a serious effect on Hegel’s account of art and its perspective. The religious sphere of art – the artistic portrayal of the topic of God – is not a success story at all, as Hegel himself emphasizes. The almost sole exception is the depiction of the motherly love of Mary in painting. The passion of Christ is a problematic topic for painting, and not only under the perspective of the portrayal of beauty.²⁸

object.” (Ibid. 242–243.) We find similar considerations in the *Aesthetics*: “every time those artists have proceeded in the worst possible way who have attempted to make out of Christ an ideal in the sense and in the manner of the classical ideal [...] The best thing in relation to the external form is the mean between natural detail and ideal beauty. To hit this due mean correctly is difficult...” A I, 536. Or “the agony of a torturing and slow death – this cannot be portrayed in the forms of Greek beauty.” A I, 538.

²⁶ The “idea” of subjective freedom is further articulated by Hegel in the system of rights, and in the two basic concepts of self-reflection and self-determination. Cf. the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right*.

²⁷ Cf. chapter C.I.

²⁸ “Christ scourged, with the crown of thorns, carrying his cross to the place of execution, nailed to the cross, passing away in the agony of a torturing and slow death – this

It is even more problematic seen under the perspective of confrontation between the need for the absolute and the all-round finitude of worldly life in human existence.

Hegel does not relieve the individual, *does not release him from the need for the absolute*, even if he is aware that *modernity is moving further away from the satisfaction of this need*; this explains his thesis about the end of art. He does not make it easier for modern human beings to understand their lives which have turned finite, contingent, and fragmentary. What is more, he says that the modern experience of the “all-round finitude” of human existence forces us to reflect it again and again in every – finite – explication of our freedom, doing it on the horizon of our interminable metaphysical desire, i.e., our infinite freedom. Because even if the actual human figure of God could be eliminated,²⁹ or the death of God could be declared, the real challenge of human existence has not been thereby solved: the elementary, existential metaphysical need remains permanent.

These challenges and burdens are generated by modernity, which – to use Agnes Heller’s phrase – “fattens particularity,” opens the gate before all conceivable (and formerly unconceivable) particularities. Hegel sums up the finitudes and particularities of the *modern* world in the term “prosaic”. In the medium of modern art, he focuses on the inevitable process of the modern individual’s life becoming prosaic, and thereby strengthens the consistency and coherence of his explanation regarding the end of art.

3. MODERN PERSONALITY AND REPRESENTATIVE INDIVIDUALS IN ROMANTIC ART

The history of modern personality and the possibility of the artistic portrayal of this personality offers the key to modern art. Art is a sort of enlightenment or diagnosis about the modern individual, who is not identical with the ancient heroes and great personalities. Christ is the first modern personality, who embodies and represents infinite subjective freedom as the principle of the modern world.

cannot be portrayed in the forms of Greek beauty.” A I, 538. In contrast to classical beauty, we face here “non-beauty” as a “necessary moment.” – For the significance of the Hegelian motive of ugliness see Francesca Ianelli, *Das Siegel der Moderne: Hegels Bestimmungen des Hässlichen in den Vorlesungen zur Ästhetik und die Rezeption bei den Hegelianern* (München: Fink, 2007), especially 137–225.

²⁹ A I, 507.

The Greeks had no need for representative subjects: for them, art was a natural expression of the absolute *and* their own immediate existence; there was no gap between the immediate actuality, the natural existence of the Greeks *and* their art. The need for representative subject appears in modern times, when the spheres of actuality and the worlds of knowledge, feeling, and imagination, or the divine and the human become so estranged from each other that the ways of relinking them are no more obvious, but require effort and grounding.

Christ is not just *one* modern personality among others, but *representant* (Agnes Heller) or *ideal type* (Max Weber). His character is not identical with his own personal (fictional or real) biography. It is more than just a biography: it represents something else. Its explanation lies in the fact that in modernity, self-identity is no longer given (*gegeben*) and ready-made, but is given as a task (*aufgegeben*) for every individual. The model has the function to show the way from tension-filled, conflicted and divided existence to the possibility of self-identical existence.³⁰ Art obtains its cultural function in this context, whereby works of art and the characters depicted in them do not give artistic pleasure only, but are capable of helping unstable individuals in seeking their identity. The function of education for freedom can offer points of orientation for the shaping of one's own life through works of art as well.

After Christ, various characters step on the scene as the representatives of modern freedom. The "conceptual" protagonist of the worldly sphere of modern art is "worldly subjectivity," which sums up different representatives and ideal types.³¹ The first great character of "worldly subjectivity" is the *knight*, who has his determinations: respect, love, or loyalty, not as traditional values, but as the expressions of his *own* inner world. The knight is a representative subject, because he means something else beyond his own singularity: he is a model for conduct, communicated to those who care to orientate, choose values, and practice them at the dawn of modernity. The models of Christ and the knight are built in the history

³⁰ This is what Hegel's 1793 Tübingen sermon expresses. Cf. Erzsébet Rózsa, "Versöhnung und die Prosa der modernen Freiheit," in *Versöhnung und System*, 13–72.

³¹ For the conceptual differentiation of subjectivity in the categorical medium of religious and worldly art, and for the central role of subjective disposition, the thematization of non-beauty see the general discussion of romantic art in the *Aesthetics*. The meanings of subjectivity and the means of portraying them is also a central topic of the 1823 lectures. The fact that the "external does not satisfy the internal" manifests the dissolution of harmony. While the "whole content is centered in the subjective human soul [...] the sphere of content becomes infinitely broad, encompassing a variety without limits." Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 232–36.

of European culture and – as elements of cultural remembrance – they can be utilized again and again in the life conduct of individuals; even if their representative character becomes a little worn out in the course of history.

The knight, and later the citizen, as the worldly subjects of romantic art, enter a finite, even brutal existence that the characters of classical art have not known.³² Still, the “empirical human beings” of modernity approach the finite world with confidence. They trust they can find something in it that they know or even love in their own life or in the life of somebody else who is close to them. This *trust* and *confidence* holds for Christ and the knight. They are also familiar for us: they have properties, external and internal features which are not alien for us, which do not leave us indifferent even after centuries or millennia. The role of the representative individual as a model is manifested by this closeness and familiarity preserved in cultural remembrance. However, it is not Christ and the knight, but a third character of modern subjectivity who is definitely a close acquaintance of ours: it is the *citizen*. The artistic portrayal of a citizen, be it by Molière, Shakespeare, or from contemporary German drama reminds us of ourselves or people we know. We feel *at home*: “It is the fact that it is so much at home in the commonplace that enables romantic art to attract us so familiarly by its external forms.”³³ The question is, whether the citizen who is at home in everyday and prosaic life, can be a representative individual for later ages, for us, as depicted in the medium of art. The answer is also decisive for the prospects of art.

4. “HONEST CITIZEN”: THE “PROTAGONIST” OF ROMANTIC ART AND THE GRAVE-DIGGER OF ART

The role of Christ and his life as a model has been widely written on. The pattern of the knight has also inspired many, well beyond its own

³² The soul attains “a mundane content,” and “becomes one of a *worldly* kind.” “From the principle of religious inwardness” it enters into “mundane spiritual life.” This is the “varied particularity and restrictedness of finitude and the world.” A I, 552–554. – The religious sphere of romantic art is an object of sharp critique here: “it still remains in the inwardness of ideas which consumes existence in its living expansion, and is far from satisfying in life itself the higher demand of its own life, even if that life be filled with the mundane and unfolded into reality.” A I, 552. – In the 1823 lectures Hegel describes this turn in a few words: “The inwardness of the soul descends from its heaven, leaves its substantial sphere, and becomes worldly.” Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 243.

³³ A I, 532.

historical era. What we have to ask here is: if the citizen – who was not just Hegel's contemporary, but is, in a way, our own contemporary as well – represents anything, what is it that he is representative of. Modern citizen enters the stage of history at a time when “all-round finitude” and the “prose of life” begin to expand and dominate the modern spheres of life. Historically, the point of departure is the age of the Reformation, as Hegel emphasizes several times. He watches with sympathy how the life-base and life conduct of the citizen becomes prosaic, and how it is portrayed in art, e.g., in Flemish painting.³⁴ However, when becoming prosaic reaches the point where the “prose of life” is legitimized by the “prose of thinking” and “intellect” in the age of the Enlightenment, he is no longer enthusiastic. This kind of prose – the instrumental rationality of “intellectual thinking,” which dominates life conduct as a whole – is watched by Hegel with mixed feelings, keeping distance, or sometimes rejection.

But why has the development of the modern subject taken such a turn? Because the model of Christ has been distorted, says Hegel. “The virtues of Christian piety in their abstract attitude kill the mundane and make the subject free only if he absolutely repudiates himself in his humanity.”³⁵ The distortion consists mainly in the fact, that *in Christianity and its art the worldly has not been included in the self-determination of the subject*. The mature Hegel criticizes the “killing of the mundane” and the negation of humanity in Christianity with similar vigor and similar arguments as either the young Hegel, or later Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Originating in Christianity but in opposition to its denial of the world the first representative character of solely *human subjectivity*, the *knight* steps on the scene. It is not his “virtues,” honesty, love, and loyalty that make him an important and attractive character: rather the forms of the person's self-filled inwardness. Due to this “worldly turn,” subjectivity “can unfold himself in the entirety of his human particular character, so that the whole of the human heart and the entire wealth of human manifestations are made accessible to art.”³⁶ The historical stage of knighthood is a step forward, because it creates *inwardness*, which is an indisputable merit of chivalry.³⁷

³⁴ For the importance of civil disposition in Flemish painting, see A II, 885–887. For the importance of completely insignificant objects for civil disposition, see Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról* 312–313.

³⁵ A I, 556.

³⁶ A II, 793.

³⁷ Its basis consists in the principle of romantic art, i.e. subjectivity. Subjectivity first receives the Absolute as its object in the religious sphere of art. Knighthood is the first shape of worldly art. Its content, however, is “subjective, infinite relation to itself.” Honor,

Nevertheless, this age and its ideal type also have their deficiencies: "Yet what is still lacking at this present stage is the filling of this inwardness with the concrete content of human relations, characters, passions, and real existence in general."³⁸ It does not become clear here that the elimination of this deficit will cause the crisis of real art. For the requirement of involving the "concrete content of actual existence" in inwardness, or the integration of civil-prosaic life into works of art leads to the disintegration of the existential base of art. However, we are still at the topic of the knight, who has fulfilled the requirement of involving the worldly only partially, because he focuses first and foremost on himself. It has the advantage of developing inwardness, but it is also deficient in integrating the spheres of the mundane. This defect can only be overcome by making "actual life" and "actual world" the object of art. It is true, that the knight himself recognizes finite existence: his subjectivity and finitude are not only means to experience the absolute and mediate it, as in the case of Christ. Experiencing this finite existence and positing his own finite life as an *end in itself* is integral part of the knight's life. His subjectivity and *inwardness* thus becomes *worldly and present*: "the spirit is spread abroad, is on the lookout for itself in its present world, and widens its actual mundane heart."³⁹ This kind of worldliness – *mundane heart* – does not eliminate the tendency of the knight to concentrate on himself and his inner world. This egocentric inclusion of the mundane to the differentiating inner world of individuality leads to difficulties and contradictions both in artistic portrayal and the applicability of the model. *A Self concentrating on himself and developing his inner world can hardly serve as a model for the protagonist of modernity: the citizen who acts in the spheres of the world.*

This egocentrism of the world and conduct of the knight cannot change by itself: there is no inner motivation for this. The deficiency of this conduct can only be superseded by another model: when prosaic life and prosaic world are included in the inwardness elaborated by the knight, and made the object of art. This happens when civil conditions become widespread: *honest citizen with his prosaic lifeworld* becomes the protagonist of the next age of modern art. Remarkably, it is the "honest citizen," and not just the citizen in general who will have an eminent status as a result of

love, or loyalty are not ethical qualities: "only forms of the romantic self-filled inwardness of the subject." A I, 553.

³⁸ A I, 572.

³⁹ A I, 553.

these changes. Citizen is the ideal type of new life conditions, the subject of civil society, i.e., the economic and social structures of the modern age. Hegel describes this in detail in the *Philosophy of Right*.⁴⁰ This is where he introduces rectitude (*Rechtschaffenheit*) as the fundamental ethical characteristic of this subject.⁴¹ Virtue, which he also discusses here, is another kind of ethical determination: an idea that brings us back to the Greek world, and not an empirically universal model for conduct, with which modernity replaces virtue as an idea. Virtue is at home in the world of heroes and great characters, in that of Achilles or Antigone. We cannot speak of virtues in this sense in the case of the knight, either: honesty, love, and loyalty – the determinations of the knight – are not substantial virtues, but components of his world elaborated in inwardness. Virtue, which mediates substantial values and is therefore necessarily elitist, cannot become a point of orientation for the life conduct of everyone and anyone in any circumstances. The relevance of virtue is always attached to extraordinary circumstances: it offers a valid ideal basis in the conflict between the different ethical powers represented by Antigone and Creon, i.e., divine and human law.⁴²

In modern subject, virtue is superseded by “*moral reflection*.” In this novel situation, actions are not or not purely based on traditional, substantial norms, but on the *subjective right of self-consciousness and self-determination*.⁴³ The emphasis on these subjective rights, however, can cause collisions in the shapes of consciousness, e.g., in conscience. These powers, however, are not generated by ethical powers: they are of a subjective nature, derived from the rights of self-consciousness. The

⁴⁰ Cf. R, 228–229 (§ 190), R, 236–239 (§§ 204–207), and the paragraphs on the corporation.

⁴¹ For a treatment of rectitude, see R, 238 (§ 207). – While introducing rectitude within the chapter on civil society, Hegel refers back to the chapter on morality, where he defined such basic concepts as self-reflection and self-determination. The individual attains its “actuality” through asserting these theoretical and practical capabilities in “existence.” In sum: “The ethical disposition within this system is therefore that of *rectitude* and the *honour of one’s estate*, so that each individual, by a process of self-determination, makes himself a member of one of the moments of civil society through his activity, diligence, and skill, and supports himself in this capacity; and only through this mediation with the universal does he simultaneously provide for himself and gain *recognition* in his own eyes and in the eyes of others.”

⁴² “Actual collisions” do occur, and they are solved by virtue as a compass and norm of actions. At this stage of Greek art, virtues, characters and actions are not yet separated; in contrast to modern individuals’ characters and spheres of action. The reflective attitude of Hamlet and the insufficiency of his actions is a characteristic example of Hegel.

⁴³ Cf. the chapter on morality in the *Philosophy of Right* and chapter B.I.3.1 of the present work.

self-consciousness of the modern individual – an early historical shape of which is inwardness – is not limited by anything, and thus broadens the possibility of collision to *infinity*. This expansive nature of subjectivity and its consequences raise a question which is of extraordinary importance for modern dramatic art as well: how can we find reliable bases for our decisions and actions when these are no longer available in objective, traditional norms like virtue? A result of the new situation of the modern individual, the eminent role of self-consciousness and self-determination, is “vacillating attitude” which is mentioned by Hegel in numerous contexts, in connection with the loss of virtue and the one-sidedly elevated status of the right of self-consciousness and self-determination which supersedes it.

Hegel offers a possible solution in *rectitude*. Rectitude is a sort of *subjective virtue*. It is of a subjective moral nature, at the same time ethical-communal, which mediates between ethical objective life and the individuals' subjective self-consciousness and right to self-determination/self-disposal. In rectitude – unlike in the idea of virtue – it is not given in a universal-categorical manner what is ethical and what is not, as it can and should be determined in the individuals' “moral reflection” and its relations to their own particular lifeworlds and inner worlds. Therefore, rectitude is a *middle* between objective ethical norms and subjective moral self-determination. Hegel's model is closely related to the *mezoon* of Aristotle. Kant's influence is also detectable, in so far as duty becomes a part of rectitude as the product of moral self-reflection and self-determination. Thus, Hegel makes rectitude a general norm combining the modern individual's reflective, normative, and practical viewpoints; this norm is the pattern of conduct on the horizon of modern world.⁴⁴ Its base in life is the individual citizens' “particular existence,” their distinctive lifeworld. However, the lifeworld of the “honest citizen” cannot be based solely on self-determination as “subjective right,” since it would surrender the citizen and modern society in whole to arbitrariness, chaos, and anarchy. Another foundation of modern society lies in the fact that it asserts the “objective right” of substantial powers existing and valid in modernity

⁴⁴ In Hegel's view, modern lifeworld, economy and all our resources are based on self-care: “It is inherent essentially in the principle of our deeper life that, on the whole, every man fends for himself, i.e. is himself competent to take his place in the world.” A I, 569. – Hegel does not merely follow Adam Smith here: for him, self-determination is a comprehensive attitude of the self-conscious modern individual, and a basis for the Hegelian conception of modernity.

as well, namely constitutional state, law, legal system, i.e., the ethical life of the modern world in its own differentiated worldly spheres and their system. The “right of objectivity” refers to the turn of substantial contents into formal laws, which is linked to the principle of subjective freedom and has its roots historically in the Roman world.

Modern society bears in itself the impression of *substantial* powers transcending the individual and reminiscent of past worlds, the *system of the objective macrostructures* of this society, and the *microspheres* of the individuals’ own life, own biography, own history. This lifeworld has its own ethos: the honest work and conduct of the citizen. It is indisputably more vulgar and prosaic than that of Christ or the knight, but still an ethos of some sort.

Now how can all of this be relevant to art?

In Hegel’s judgment, everyday civil rectitude as the typical ethos of modern individuals has been perfectly depicted in Dutch painting.⁴⁵ He refers primarily to Rembrandt and Van Dyke when he says:

On the other hand, with the Dutch in their taverns, at weddings and dances, at feasting and drinking, everything goes on merrily and jovially, even if matters come to quarrels and blows; wives and girls join in and a feeling of freedom and gaiety animates one and all. This spiritual cheerfulness in a justified pleasure, which enters even pictures of animals and which is revealed as satisfaction and delight – this freshly awakened spiritual freedom and vitality in conception and execution – constitutes the higher soul of pictures of this kind.⁴⁶

However, modern individuals represented by the honest citizen do not will the “*higher in human*” (das Höhere im Menschen) as their immediate goal. They are far from the world where this standard used to be valid. What they want from life is something completely different than what the Greeks or the knight did: satisfaction with existence and in existence, satisfaction with themselves and their finite, particular lives. Satisfaction attainable in ordinary life gets an excellent portrayal in Dutch painting. The desire and end of *satisfaction* is connected to “vacillating attitude”; modern individuals are in need of confirmation and certainty in order to

⁴⁵ Of the civil rectitude of the Dutch he says: “This citizenship, this love of enterprise, in small things as in great, in their own land as on the high seas, this painstaking as well as cleanly and neat well-being, this joy and exuberance in their own sense that for all this they have their own activity to thank, all this is what constitutes the general content of their pictures.” A I, 169.

⁴⁶ A I, 169–170.

become full-fledged personalities. They can achieve this through establishing harmony between their own individual subjectivity and their circumstances either given or created by themselves; in their own lifeworlds and life conduct, where they really belong, and where they themselves have the central position. They can indeed find this harmony at least for a while, e.g. in an extreme case, in the "philistine feeling" of satisfaction. This attitude, as Hegel points out, is radically different from the Greek feeling to life.⁴⁷

Satisfaction is also a *confirmation of the harmony* between our own subjectivity and our circumstances. This is what modern human beings need: they can experience their freedom in their own vulgar and prosaic lifeworld through the civil/philistine feeling of satisfaction. Even their religion, Protestantism leads them in this direction, with its "footing in the prose of life."⁴⁸ This kind of *balanced life conduct* is excellently portrayed in Dutch painting: the primary object of this painting is the ordinary lifeworld of the honest citizen and his satisfaction with it.⁴⁹ The artistic justification of the honest citizen's mentality includes the Flemish's fulfillment of the requirement that modern individuals has to *mediate between their "own heart and actuality."* This provides them with a stance that constitutes a "not so ordinary" point of orientation for their actions and life conduct. "The right of the heart and feeling" attain validity in this satisfaction.

The phenomena of modern art show that human beings are satisfied in their affirmation of finite existence. It also means, however, that they

⁴⁷ The difference between these two worlds, the types of individuals and feelings present in them, is discussed by Hegel in his comparison of the ideals of classic and romantic art: "The repose of divine serenity may not be particularized into joy, pleasure, and contentment, and the *peace* of the eternal must not sink into the laughter of self-satisfaction and comfortable enjoyment. Contentment is the feeling of correspondence between our individual self and the condition of our specific situation whether that be given to us or brought about by us. [...] For contentment is only the approval of my own being, acting, and doing, and the extreme of this approval can be recognized in that Philistine feeling to which every successful man must rise!" A I, 485.

⁴⁸ Hegel makes some sharp remarks here: "to Protestantism alone the important thing is to get a sure footing in the prose of life, to make it absolutely valid in itself independently of religious associations, and to let it develop in unrestricted freedom." A I, 598.

⁴⁹ The modern individual finds its foundation in ordinary life, in everyday rectitude, and does not long for anything more. German dramatic poetry, however, has not portrayed this successfully: even Goethe and Schiller have missed the point (not to mention Kotzebue and Iffland). Dutch painting is a better example: "Satisfaction in present-day life, even in the commonest and smallest things, flows in the Dutch from the fact that what nature affords directly to other nations, they have had to acquire by hard struggles and bitter industry, and, circumscribed in their locality, they have become great in their care and esteem of the most insignificant things." A I, 597.

become the *grave-diggers of art*. When modern individuals positively find themselves in civil attitude and feeling, it is the beginning of the actuality of modernity and the end of art – this could be the summary of Hegel's frequently cited, (in)famous thesis about the end of art. It is no arbitrary statement, or a prophecy: it is a conclusion that Hegel reached through manifold and in-depth analyses of complex developments. His examples demonstrate that the power of the "prose of life" as an object of art can be viewed in the most admirable shapes in Dutch painting. This *height* however, *warns us of the end: the higher ideals of art cannot be eliminated or portrayed in shapes of fishermen and peasants*.

Hegel points out that the prosaic turn of modernity is an irreversible, and constantly broadening process. As a result, all spheres of life and all phenomena can find their place in art, the greatest as well as the most insignificant, the highest and the lowest, the moral and the immoral, good and evil; just about everything, as the most extreme object and form. "Real actuality in its prosaic objectivity," comprehending ordinary life as a whole, can and does become the material of art. Nothing can be alien to art, which opens its gates before *all phenomena* of modern life. Art, however, also strives to protect itself against this radical change, the unbounded expansion of the object and content of art. Hegel examines one protective strategy in detail: the inclination to formalism, which is also an escape from the expansion of ordinary content.

It has turned out that honest citizen, the protagonist of modernity, is *not an actual representative individual*, due to his particular subjectivity and the ordinary, prosaic character of his life. The "higher in human" is no longer a valid criterion. Nor does it have to be one. There is no more need for persons who represent forms of life and patterns of conduct, because the *empirical universality of modern freedom has been realized in actuality*. It is the individuals' own decision, what sort of life conduct and pattern they follow. In the world of empirically universal freedom, all those who choose to *shape their inner world and lifeworld by their own decision* can become honest citizens or even particular characters: *this is the highest imperative of modernity*. It is at the same time completely formal, because particular content is dependent on the single individuals. A world operating this way and becoming ever more prosaic and particular in its contents is no longer inspiring for art, as the object it can offer, the lifeworld of the honest citizen and his philistine satisfaction is boring and insignificant. We know this mentality and this world all too well from real life, since nearly everyone becomes a citizen in the modern world. We are thus no longer interested in this life and mentality in art. The same holds for

great characters. If anyone and everyone can become a particular character, which derives from the modern principle of infinite free subjectivity, the former normative greatness of individuality evaporates. The individual becomes either a philistine, whom we meet in tiresome German plays (Kotzebue and Iffland are Hegel's favorite examples), or an extreme subjective character, elevating himself to the level of "absolute subjectivity," who becomes the protagonist of comedy. Anyway, comedy is the last genre of modern art – and not romantic fiction, which Hegel barely mentions here. After all, art itself forecasts its own end, when reflecting the developments in actuality.

5. COMEDY AS THE LAST GENRE OF ART AND THE FINAL DISAPPEARANCE OF GREATNESS FROM ART

No one is born a knight or a citizen. In modernity, everyone can choose one's own social and personal identity. *Education* plays an eminent role in the process of socialization: it communicates cultural heritage. Thus, the conduct of the knight can appear as an option in the socialization process of becoming a citizen. The *repetition* of this historically obsolete form of conduct in modernity marks the development of a *new genre, romantic fiction*.

This romantic fiction is chivalry become serious again, with a real subject-matter. The contingency of external existence has been transformed into a firm and secure order of civil society and the state, so that police, law-courts, the army, political government replace the chimerical ends which the knights errant set before themselves. Thereby the knight-errantry of the heroes as they act in more modern romances is also altered. As individuals with their subjective ends of love, honor, and ambition, or with their ideals of reforming the world, they stand opposed to this substantial order and the prose of actuality which puts difficulties in their way on all sides.⁵⁰

The sharp contrast between the subjective ends and ideals of the knight and the objective order of civil society is not really apt to become the object of artistic portrayal. The modern knight, i.e., the young man who does not want to be a citizen, faces an "enchanted" world alien to him, which he must fight. The world, however, does not give way to his passions; it interposes as a hindrance the will of a father or an aunt as civil

⁵⁰ A I, 592.

relationships.⁵¹ His lofty ideals thereby become a laughing stock. One-time knightly conduct in “newer romantic fiction” *ab ovo* offers the chance of irony, humor, and comedy: because of the above phenomena of civil society and its forms of conduct, romantic fiction cannot develop into an actually independent genre in Hegel’s conception. Was he wrong? Certainly, but his diagnosis is remarkable all the same.

What is set forth here as an object, is more suitable for sociological or socio-psychological analysis than artistic portrayal. The subject of modernity usually starts his life as a knight, but sooner or later he becomes a citizen, or philistine. Hegel emphasizes the “gravity” of this turn in everyone’s life. Experience, education by present actuality makes sense as an apprenticeship – like in the case of Wilhelm Meister. At the same time, Hegel views this typical and no doubt important phenomenon with irony, or even sarcasm, as is apparent from the following citation:

Young people especially are these modern knights who must force their way through the course of the world which realizes itself instead of their ideals, and they regard it as a misfortune that there is any family, civil society, state, laws, professional business, etc., because these substantive relations of life with their barriers cruelly oppose the ideals and the infinite rights of the heart. Now the thing is to breach this order of things, to change the world, to improve it, or at least in spite of it to carve out of it a heaven upon earth: to seek for the ideal girl, find her, win her away from her wicked relations or other discordant ties, and carry her off in defiance. But in the modern world these fights are nothing more than ‘apprenticeship,’ the education of the individual into the realities of the present, and thereby they acquire their true significance. For the end of such apprenticeship consists in this, that the subject sows his wild oats, builds himself with his wishes and opinions into harmony with subsisting relationships and their rationality, enters the concatenation of the world, and acquires for himself an appropriate attitude to it. However much he may have quarrelled with the world, or been pushed about in it, in most cases at last he gets his girl and some sort of position, marries her, and becomes as good a Philistine as others. The woman takes charge of household management, children arrive, the adored wife, at first unique, an angel, behaves pretty much as all other wives do; the man’s profession provides work and vexations, marriage brings domestic affliction – so here we have all the headaches of the rest of married folk.⁵²

The young man who started out as a knight, “builds himself into harmony” with “subsisting relationships,” and thereby becomes a citizen or maybe

⁵¹ A I, 593.

⁵² A I, 593.

a philistine. These relationships and contents, however, make tragic and dramatic genres groundless, while romantic fiction *ab ovo* has no prospect, due to its closeness to prosaic life. Only the comical has a chance: it prevails – at least temporarily – over tragic and mediocre drama, too. Our young knight with his noble ideals who turned a dull citizen, becomes the grave-digger of art, and it is the comedian who drives the nails in its coffin.

There is another aspect in which Hegel talks about comedy as the last genre of art. He has a positive opinion of the portrayal of the “all-round finitude” and prose of life in Flemish painting. Nevertheless, he has some reservations: it is impossible to accept, anyway, that the absolute, the primary object of art in the linear structure of the system, should be depicted in the shape of fishwives and night-watchmen. One must have irony to understand and to some extent accept this constellation of art with all of its contradictions.

After all, it is the fact that the “artistically higher” i.e., the artistic portrayal of the “higher in human” becomes impossible, that causes the above turn in modern art: the elimination of tragic and dramatic. Hence a higher foundation for life is no longer given for individuals, they have to find it in themselves. There remains only one choice for modern individuals: to make themselves absolute. This turn places the topic of the comical, the genre of comedy and humor as the habitual attitude of the modern subject’s last shape in the center of the last significant historical era of art.

In tragedy, “eternal substantiality” is triumphant. In comedy, infinitely self-assured subjectivity prevails.

In tragedy the individuals destroy themselves through the one-sidedness of their otherwise solid will and character, or they must resignedly accept what they had opposed even in a serious way. In comedy there comes before our contemplation, in the laughter in which the characters dissolve everything, including themselves, the victory of their own subjective personality which nevertheless persists self-assured.⁵³

Self-assured, “absolute subjectivity” is the key to comedy: the last shape of the modern individual which has some appeal to artistic portrayal. This character makes himself the master of everything that counts to him as the essence of what he knows and accomplishes.⁵⁴ However, he is able to keep distance from his knowledge, accomplishment and his world in

⁵³ A II, 1199.

⁵⁴ A II, 1199.

general, and does not take himself very seriously – it is exactly this character who understands himself as absolute subjectivity.

On the other hand, the comical as such implies an infinite light-heartedness and confidence felt by someone raised altogether above his own inner contradiction and not bitter or miserable in it at all: this is the bliss and ease of a man who, being sure of himself, can bear the frustration of his aims and achievements.⁵⁵

Self-assurance is not actually absolute, though: it has something negative to it, as the characters of comedy experience the failure of their own goals. They still insist on absolute self-assurance which they achieve by adopting an *ironic attitude* manifested in laughter, joy, or even happiness and good feeling. This attitude can be so stable that it does not let doubts touch their self-assurance at all. They cannot therefore admit failure, they cannot show doubt; they turn negative experience inside out, into irony and the comical.

Comical sense requires ironic attitude, the ability to endure the failure of one's higher ideals and ends. Keeping distance in irony and humor makes the subject capable of separating himself from the world of finitude, and see "apparent existence" in the experience of all-round finitude. This attitude leads the modern individual to the understanding that he can only count on himself: everything else is contingent, unstable and uncertain. Honest citizen, in contrast, is unable to develop such an attitude. First of all, he does not have the capability of viewing himself and his life-conditions with irony. He is another type: he takes himself and his world seriously, he calculates and adapts himself to the circumstances. To use Hegel's term, his "pedantic mind" makes him incapable of keeping ironic distance. This and his exaggerated seriousness, "for others his behavior is laughable in the extreme."⁵⁶

It may not be an accident that a new genre has appeared to *create a synthesis of the tragic and the comical*, having as its protagonist the citizen trying to adapt to circumstances. Opposing forces, individuals and relations become *balanced* in contemporary drama, in "*modern plays*." However, a sphere where the main aim is to reconcile interests and reach an agreement between ends and individuals is not really suitable for artistic portrayal. Individuals with a realistic knowledge of life, led by ideals (knightly ideals in their youth, calculative reason and the subjective virtue

⁵⁵ A II, 1200.

⁵⁶ A II, 1200.

of rectitude in their mature years) are not tragic, not even dramatic characters. Hegel cites the example of Antonio from Goethe's *Tasso*. "Moreover this kind almost runs the risk of departing from the genuine type of drama altogether or of lapsing into prose." The genre that "allows preponderating scope to externals, i.e., to situations and customs of the period" as modern play or romantic fiction is *not to be sought in art*, states Hegel.⁵⁷ What the knight lacked, the incorporation of concrete life-conditions, is now actualized. However, it does not serve the good of art, but points beyond it: *artistic portrayal is superseded by scientific diagnosis*. This confirms again, that Hegel was aware of the tendency to grant science an extraordinary position in modernity.

Hegel does not attribute actual artistic significance to either romantic fiction or dramatic plays. His main reason is that their content is the ordinary actuality of prosaic life, linked with the ideals and seriousness in individuals. The protagonist of this life, the honest citizen *keeps no distance* from his prosaic life and his ideals. In actual life, it can work fine: *the attitude of the honest citizen can be functionally successful*, and this is desirable, too, for the balanced operation of civil society, and the limitation of extremes. In respect of art, however, both rudimentary genres are devoid of interest – that is Hegel's judgment. There is only one artistically relevant form of relation to the finite, prosaic world and its representative subject: what irony, humor and comedy express.

Hegel makes the following illuminating remark of the *genre* of comedy:

The comical therefore plays its part more often in people with lower views, tied to the real world and the present, i.e., among men who are what they are once and for all, who cannot be or will anything different, and, though incapable of any genuine 'pathos,' have not the least doubt about what they are and what they are doing. But at the same time they reveal themselves as having something higher in them because they are not seriously tied to the finite world with which they are engaged but are raised above it and remain firm in themselves and secure in face of failure and loss. It is to this absolute freedom of spirit which is utterly consoled in advance in every human undertaking, to this world of private serenity, that Aristophanes conducts us. If you have not read him, you can scarcely realize how men can take things so easily."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ A II, 1204. – Hegel adds that a number of new plays aim not at being poetic, but at arising emotions, providing entertainment or ethical teaching; or they simply serve the actor's virtuosity.

⁵⁸ A II, 1220–1121.

Modern comedy is different. It was not Aristophanes, but Shakespeare, who developed an actual comic attitude. The modern world shaped the peculiar mode of comedy, comical and poetic at the same time.

Here once again the keynote is good humour, assured and careless gaiety despite all failure and misfortune, exuberance and the audacity of a fundamentally happy craziness, folly, and idiosyncrasy in general. Consequently there is presented here once more (in a deeper wealth and inwardness of humour), whether in wider or narrower circles of society, in a subject-matter whether important or trivial, what Aristophanes achieved to perfection in his field in Greece. As a brilliant example of this sort of thing I will name Shakespeare once again, in conclusion, but without going into detail.⁵⁹

Comedy is also a form of art's self-reflection: it seeks the meaning (Sinn) of art. It does so under the peculiar perspective that *comedy portrays art in its dissolution* when the absolute, which is present, and the characters and ends of real existence are no longer united and cannot be united. After this dissolution, nothing else remains that is subjective as such, which in turn seems to be self-assured even in its dissolution. Hegel sums up his diagnosis at the end of his treatise:

We ended with the romantic art of emotion and deep feeling where absolute subjective personality moves free in itself and in the spiritual world. Satisfied in itself, it no longer unites itself with anything objective and particularized and it brings the negative side of this dissolution into consciousness in the humour of comedy.⁶⁰

Through self-reflection, art is aware of its own dissolution, which is also proved by the fact that it places humor and comedy on the top. Comedy as art's self-reflection becomes conscious of its own dissolution in the "humor of comedy." Thus, "art arrives at its end in comedy."⁶¹

Beside the question of genres, Hegel refers to a *contentual* feature, also in relation to absolute subjectivity. The absolute is not present in the characters of modern works of art, their ends or actions. This is characteristic of Flemish painting as well. The Flemish are admirable in portraying how the honest citizen finds himself at home in his prosaic, ordinary lifeworld. It is obvious from these paintings, that the absolute is missing from the world of the honest citizen, and the subject is elevated above the absolute. However, it turns out again and again that the absolute cannot

⁵⁹ A II, 1235–1236.

⁶⁰ A II, 1236.

⁶¹ Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 371.

be eliminated from human existence and its cultural forms. If the absolute cannot be portrayed in the positive any more, it returns in the negative: the absolute enters modern life *ex negativo*, which comedy presents in the shapes of "absolute subjectivity." The absolute is turned completely inside out here, meaning it has not vanished, only changed: it reappears in the shapes of comedy's "absolute subjectivity" and in ironic attitude – as a human character. *Absolute subjectivity is the ironic destruction of the absolute.* The "actual subjectivity" of romantic art, incorporating the idealtypical characters of Christ, the knight, and partially the honest citizen, turns into "absolute subjectivity," assumes the shape of the comedian, and acquires an ironic attitude.

The wise comedian is neither an honest citizen, nor a knight. The elements of knightly conduct: honesty, love, loyalty as higher ideals are similar to the virtues of ethical life and civil rectitude, albeit the latter is a subjective (non-substantial) virtue. Similar, but not identical are the actions of the knight: influenced by luck, followed by disappointments, because he relates everything to his own inwardness, unlike the modern citizen, who acts rationally and effectively, led by reasonable insights and decisions.

There is a strange character who is difficult to place in this conception, although he is a favorite hero of Hegel. Cervantes's *Don Quixote* does not belong to any of the representative characters. He obviously has nothing to do with the honest citizen, his prosaic world and views. He is closer to the romantic knight, but rather as a caricature. The character of Don Quixote joins the inwardness and the inner world of the romantic to its "internal opposition," the character of the comedian. In his character, the lofty ideals and the magnanimity of knighthood turn into lunacy. Nevertheless, he *preserves his self-confidence even in his lunacy*. Not only regarding the substantial moment of the romantic feeling of assurance, as Hegel says, but also as a feature of the ironic attitude of absolute subjectivity. *The comical and the romantic are connected internally* in the character of Don Quixote. "Without this peaceful lack of reflection in regard to the object and outcome of his actions, he would not be genuinely romantic."⁶² Hegel emphasizes the *tensions between the romantic and the comical which refer to each other*: "the whole work is on the one hand a mockery of romantic chivalry, genuinely ironical from beginning to end [...]; on the other

⁶² A I, 591–592.

hand, the adventures of Don Quixote are only the thread on which a row of genuinely romantic tales is strung in the most charming way..."⁶³

Don Quixote is not the last representative character in the sense we have used the phrase when analyzing the relations between ideal types portrayed in art and actual life-conditions in different eras. It is indisputable, however, that Hegel glimpses the first signs of the dissolution of art in him. He links the systematic discussion of romantic fiction to the character of Don Quixote in 1823. This genre, he says,

expresses the interests of the individual's heart. Individual as a free subject [...] come into opposition with the world. [...] sets off for knightly adventures, wants to improve the world, seeks for his ideal love. He fights the firmly subsisting actuality, and the outcome of this fight can only be that he does not change the world, settles down and resigns to the objective order of the world. The end consists in this, that he enters the concatenation of the world, starts a family, gets some sort of position and a wife, who – idealized at first – is just a woman like any other.⁶⁴

This analysis confirms the conclusion derived from the above: the investigation of the socio-cultural developments of the modern age, its relation to art and their mutual references shows that dissolution is in a way "programmed" in art. The idea of the end of art is not a figment of Hegel's imagination.

What kind of a person is the main character of comedy, whom Hegel treats in such an inward and yet ironic manner? A clown or a lunatic? A little bit of both. Or a sage? Yes, that too. A wise man playing the fool, or a fool who is wise, who is incapable of pathos, although he knows exactly what it is and why it is important. He is incapable of accepting pathos precisely because he sees through the constellations of the modern world, which deprive life of its pathos. Even if he enters into the games of this world – for what else could he do? – he remains an outsider all the same.

6. BEYOND ART

The age of romantic knights is gone once and for all. Knightly mentality, however, is preserved in cultural remembrance as a youthful ideal and can be recalled again and again. Modern individuals do not begin their lives as citizens, they do not even start their reflective life conduct with the norm

⁶³ A I, 592.

⁶⁴ Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 250.

of rectitude; as young people, they have knightly conduct as their ideal. Of course, it changes completely in later years, as Hegel acknowledges in a resigned-ironic tone.⁶⁵ Romantic ideal is superseded by the search for satisfaction, whereby the knight-candidate becomes a citizen, in most cases an honest citizen precisely fulfilling his duties, often a philistine, or sometimes an *épater-le-bourgeois* clown. The comedian, however, plays only a small, transitory role in the lengthy play of modernity. He is an exception who proves the rule: not the protagonist of the play. The appropriate subject of the modern world is the honest citizen, who leads a dull life, mostly; he misses the "higher in human" in his life conduct, and does not provide suitable material for artistic portrayal.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Let us recall a similar discussion of the relationship between the genre of romantic fiction and modern civil society in the *Aesthetics*: "This romantic fiction is chivalry become serious again, with a real subject-matter. The contingency of external existence has been transformed into a firm and secure order of civil society and the state, so that police, law-courts, the army, political government replace the chimerical ends which the knights errant set before themselves. Thereby the knight-errantry of the heroes as they act in more modern romances is also altered. As individuals with their subjective ends of love, honour, and ambition, or with their ideals of world-reform, they stand opposed to this substantial order and the prose of actuality which puts difficulties in their way on all sides. Therefore, in this opposition, subjective wishes and demands are screwed up to immeasurable heights; for each man finds before him an enchanted and quite alien world which he must fight because it obstructs him and in its inflexible firmness does not give way to his passions but interposes as a hindrance the will of a father or an aunt and civil relationships, etc. Young people especially are these modern knights who must force their way through the course of the world which realizes itself instead of their ideals, and they regard it as a misfortune that there is any family, civil society, state, laws, professional business, etc., because these substantive relations of life with their barriers cruelly oppose the ideals and the infinite rights of the heart. Now the thing is to breach this order of things, to change the world, to improve it, or at least in spite of it to carve out of it a heaven upon earth: to seek for the ideal girl, find her, win her away from her wicked relations or other discordant ties, and carry her off in defiance.' But in the modern world these fights are nothing more than 'apprenticeship,' the education of the individual into the realities of the present, and thereby they acquire their true significance. For the end of such apprenticeship consists in this, that the subject sows his wild oats, builds himself with his wishes and opinions into harmony with subsisting relationships and their rationality, enters the concatenation of the world, and he may have quarrelled with the world, or been pushed about in it, in most cases at last he gets his girl and some sort of position, marries her, and becomes as good a Philistine as others. The woman takes charge of household management, children arrive, the adored wife, at first unique, an angel, behaves pretty much as all other wives do; the man's profession provides work and vexations, marriage brings domestic affliction – so here we have all the headaches of the rest of married folk." A I, 592–593.

⁶⁶ The root of formalism, a basic feature of modern art in Hegel's view is to be found in this change of contents. "Suitable material" is a potential content of works of art. A potential content could be provided by other cultures and forms of art; an alternative to the dissolving art of Western culture. Cf. Jeong-Im Kwon, *Hegels Bestimmung der Kunst: Die Bedeutung der "symbolischen Kunstform" in Hegels Ästhetik* (München: Fink, 1998). See especially the chapter on the significance of symbolic art in modernity, 319–340.

It also means that the deepest reason for the dissolution of art is not found in art itself, but in the field of tension between artwork and life, the infinity of human existence and the "all-round finitude" of modern prosaic life. The greatest difficulty lies in the fact that the elementary, existential metaphysical need for the absolute cannot be eliminated from human existence by declaring that God is dead. Modern art, however, regarding its topics, genres, and ideals, is totally incapable of fulfilling this need. Life becoming prosaic, the twilight of great characters are typical symptoms of art's "malaise." The "subjective religiosity" of Hegel does not seem to be the appropriate form of our relation to the absolute, either. Only philosophy remains, although – as an elite knowledge – it is also incapable of meeting the elementary need for the absolute, as only a few are ready to take up the tedious work of acquiring the "language of the concept."

What follows from all this for the future of modern philosophy? Is it possible that great philosophies created by "honest citizens" leading ordinary lives (like Kant and Hegel) make up the history of modern philosophy? Or has the greatness of philosophy become independent from the qualities of the philosopher's character and personality, as Hegel suggests in his lectures on the history of philosophy? In philosophy, Socrates was an exceptional personality. His greatness can be compared to that of Antigone, albeit the reflected relation of Socrates to his life and death is of a completely different nature. Nevertheless, Antigone reached a similar level of self-reflection at the end of her life, which Hegel quotes several times: "Because we suffer we acknowledge we have erred." The greatness of Spinoza's character is shown by the fact that he has chosen the freedom of thinking and rejected the offer of the Elector of Pfalz. But after all, they are the only ones who showed human greatness among philosophers. Great philosophies separated from the individual, as the philosophical achievements of German idealism, are exceptions in Hegel's eyes: peaks that foreshadow the end, like in the case of Dutch genre-painting. For one last time, we can admire them as the highest possible philosophical expressions of the absolute, but they are doomed to the same fate as art with the twilight of Flemish painting and (German) drama.

Modernity does not only mark the end of great art, but of great philosophy as well. It was beyond doubt for Hegel, that works of art and philosophy can and will exist in late modernity, but he also knew that some developments of the modern world would radically change their meaning, and their status in modern society and culture. His sense of reality did not fail him in his prophecy about the end of not just art but religion and philosophy as well. He foresaw that the technical and technological developments treated in his conception of modern economy, and the evolution

of science would radically change the former status of art, religion, and philosophy. He expressed several times that the social status of sciences would become increasingly higher. He assessed "modern preconditions" as the context of this change in his lectures on the philosophy of religion.⁶⁷ In the *Philosophy of Right*, examining the relations of church, science, and state, he remarked that science would take the place of the church, which had for long effectively endeavored to treat the spiritual as its own property. Science is the spirit of the newer age, the sphere of culture in a broad sense, which aims at predominance. Like religion or like a church, it

develops into a totality with its own distinct principle which may consider itself as occupying the same position as the Church, but with even greater justification. Thus, science may also demand the same independence from the state, and treat the latter simply as a means which should provide for it as an end in itself.⁶⁸

Hegel knew that these developments – science's claim to power, its paradox relationship with the state (spiritual-intellectual independence and reliance on the material sources of the state) will affect culture as a whole. These considerations of Hegel prophesize the restructuring of the whole world of the spirit. Thus, the Hegelian conception of absolute spirit has not been eliminated by him, but by those developments of modernity, whose first signs and phenomena he himself saw and reflected in his conception of modernity; perhaps marginally, but with great sensitivity and a sharp intellect.

The question how these changes will affect modern individuals, their personality, inner world, lifeworld, life conduct and legal consciousness, their culture of freedom, lay outside the scope of Hegelian philosophy. The owl of Minerva saved him from making unfounded prophecies. Today's challenge is to pose new questions about the status, meaning, and significance of art, philosophy, and religion in the manifoldly articulated, and at the same time chaotic culture of our post-postmodern, globalized world and in the personal life of human beings. The young Lukács's question inspired by Kant remains valid: "works of art exist – how are they possible?"⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*. Die vollendete Religion. 8–12.

⁶⁸ R, 297–298 (§ 270).

⁶⁹ Georg Lukács, *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst 1912–1914* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1974), 9.

EPILOGUE

... a spirit (...) is (for us) only under this condition of the free spirituality of the subject, for it is only free spirituality that can relate to spirit.¹

Everyone has to beat his own path in life.²

This book may disappoint those who expect easy access to the Hegelian topic of individuality. To read and interpret Hegel means primarily that we take up the “tedious work of the concept.” In this sense, the present interpretation is committed to Hegelian philosophy as a system, and its corresponding conceptuality as the adequate form and language of philosophy in the Hegelian sense. However, it is *not* this conceptuality and system that stands in the focus of the present work, but a field of topics pushed to the margin by systematic structure and conceptuality (or so it seems): *the existential, moral, cultural (artistic, religious, philosophical) reflective and self-reflective forms and ways of the modern individual's existence; the contexts and “determinations” of the individual's “personal being,” “particular existence” and concrete lifeworld in modernity.*

I have chosen a special approach and procedure to explore this field – which is marginal in the structure of the “external” system and its primary conceptuality, but offers a serious *extra meaning* – as a complex of architectonically *integral*, and thematically *relevant* aspects and components of Hegel's practical philosophy and conception of spirit. At the same this approach had to remain faithful to Hegel's intentions, conception, and text.³ An appropriate method to explore the mentioned extra meaning presented itself in utilizing the *internal articulation* of Hegel's scientific *system* (its linear and circular structures) and Hegel's socio-cultural *contextualization* of philosophy. The reconstruction of this contextualization opened the way towards the Hegelian interpretation of the

¹ HP III, 97–98.

² Hegel, *Előadások a művészet filozófiájáról*, 246.

³ Pippin divides contemporary Hegel scholarship into three groups, based on their approach to Hegelian philosophy. I consider the present work as belonging to the third group, characterized by a close reading of the texts and respect for the systematic ambitions of Hegel. At the same time, it argues that the Hegelian oeuvre has plenty of contemporary philosophical value, which it attempts to demonstrate and utilize in its interpretation. Cf. Robert Pippin, “Vorwort,” in Quante, *Die Wirklichkeit des Geistes*, 15–17.

cultural tasks and functions of philosophy (*Bildung zur Freiheit*) and the phenomena, *idealtypical and/or extreme occurrences* of modern society and lifeworld. The extra meaning resulting from the exploration of these systemic dimensions and contexts, and their internally connected *conceptuality and phenomenality* opened a multiply articulated, comprehensive and novel perspective, in which Hegel's theory of modern individuality almost *naturally became focal*.

This "multi-dimensionality" (Tillich) offered a further possibility to leave the boundaries of the *explicitly* given system and its strict conceptuality without abandoning the spirit of Hegel, or eliminating the external structure and primary conceptuality of the system. This gave an opportunity to reconstruct the elementary *existential* aspects of human existence as *individual existence*, and the *particular lifeworld* of the *person* – of every single individual – and its components. These elements include human and personal rights, disposition, conscience, faith, subjective religiosity, love, or the tensions between good life and welfare, ego-centric and cooperative life conduct, or those questions of legal, economic, and political freedom, which have a direct influence on the individuals' lifeworld. By broadening and reinterpreting the system- and conceptuality-dependent aspects of modern individuality – to which the utilization of systemic dimensions offers an actual opportunity – I was able to explore those phenomena of individual-personal existence and lifeworld, which remain valid in post-postmodern, or late modernity.

We obtained thus an *extra meaning* regarding Hegelian *conceptuality* as well. We faced a peculiar conceptuality which can hardly be classified as part of the well-known, *primary* conceptuality of Hegel. A typical example was provided by some contextualizations of the logical formation of universal, particular, and individual in the spirit, which seemed marginal there. By applying the totality of systemic dimensions, I could shed light on the significance of the complex notion of *particularity* in the Hegelian conception of modern individuality. The eminent status of such Hegelian terms as the "right to particularity" and its satisfaction, "particular existence" as "personal existence," "concrete person" with particular needs, or "infinitely free subjectivity" as the "principle of the modern world" becomes clear *exactly in these conceptual constellations that proceed from the different dimensions of the system*. These Hegelian terms show the actual meaning and significance of their conceptuality through this type of reconstruction only. This is what I call secondary conceptuality.

My analysis focused on the hidden Hegel. The one who held everything personal and inward strictly and shyly at a distance from his philosophy

and maybe from himself, too. This is only one side of the medal, though. If we scratch the surface of the system and conceptuality, we find a real gold-mine. We find a series of evidence to prove the continuity of the oeuvre, by showing how the youthful motive of “interference into people’s life” became the basic motive of the oeuvre. Sharp-witted considerations on the groundless modern individual, the constant strife of the “separate human being” to regain identity and integrity, to find a compass in himself or herself are the motif of the whole oeuvre. This and the theory of modernity made up from conceptional and phenomenal elements is what makes Hegel our contemporary: close, personal acquaintance, a spiritual companion, and a partner in debate.

The *genre* of my work is by no means an obvious one. I can only circumscribe it. It is in a way a *scholarly enterprise*, dealing with Hegel’s system and conceptuality. This genre has predominance in the first (A) part, dealing with “Hegel and individuality”; and in the first chapter of the second (B) part, on the “systematic conceptual determinations of modern individuality in subjective and objective spirit.” In the remaining chapters of part (B) and in the whole of part (C) systematic conceptuality loses its dominance and I investigate the secondary conceptuality of modern individual existence and its phenomena as perceived and thematized by Hegel. These chapters face us not just with the different conceptuality of the phenomenological approach, but with a different genre as well. *Personal involvement* becomes more explicit. My life-long interest (“interesse”) in Hegel’s works, his motives and topics regarding individuality, freedom, and the problems of it in modernity is no ranting declaration on my side, but a motive and attachment that penetrates my own life in a literal sense. The present book has some features of a *personal confession*; it expresses a “life-motive” in terms of a “conscious life” (Henrich) as well.

If we aim at reconstructing Hegel’s lifework in the above sense, we inevitably face the loss of life’s tragical and poetic character, and the emergence of mediocrity and prose in the existential conditions of the modern individual. We can just as well speak of the odyssey of the modern individual, albeit not in the original epic sense. At the end of one of my lectures in Rome on the shapes of individuality in modern art, someone spontaneously cried out: but it was a romance! It very well may be that this book too has some *features of a romance*; some parts of it can be read as telling a story. I can only hope that the mixture of genres has not led to theoretical disintegration.

Having completed this book, I feel a sort of content. I got answers for a number of questions that had excited and inspired me in Hegel’s

philosophy from the very start. I understand now how reconciliation as a systematic-structural principle and reconciliation as a model of self-conduct are connected internally in the relations of systemic dimensions and their twofold conceptuality; and how this connection can be linked to the questions of personal life conduct.⁴ I also understand how this connection is based on a basic motive of Hegel: on interference into people's lives under modern circumstances. It is now that I start to discover the deeper meaning of my book on the *concept* of Hegel's practical individuality.⁵ The former title of this work mentioned a *theory* of individuality, albeit I used the term *conception* of individuality more frequently in my argument. This was not sloppiness. The reconstruction of the Hegelian theory of individuality was only a *result* of the whole. It took years to incorporate "conceptional" elements and aspects described in my earlier papers and my book on *Praktische Individualität* to the present book. Theory, as a formation explicating and illuminating a conception through further elements and aspects, could only be a consequence, as the methodological considerations of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* say. I do hope that my book presents some consequences of this nature. It does not treat the complete Hegelian theory of individuality; and it only touches the questions of logic and natural philosophy. Its focus on practical philosophy and on Hegel's conception of modernity mark the "external" limitations of my enterprise. Its internal shortcomings are totally mine.

This book owes a lot to scholarly meetings and conversations in the past two decades or so. The list of contributors – either because of their critique or their encouragement – would be too long to cite here. I thank them all. I would like to express my special gratitude to those, though, who have been of both professional and personal help in these past two decades since freedom of thought became a reality in Hungary. Manfred Riedel had been a great colleague and a friend of mine from 1986 until his death. I am also indebted to Michael Quante, whose professional and personal support from 1991 to the present day means more to me than I can express. I am also grateful to philosophers like Ludwig Siep, Volker Gerhardt, Christoph Jamme, Paul Cobben, Andrew Buchwalter, Klaus Vieweg, Heinz Kimmerle, Andreas Arndt, Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, Herta Nagl, Francesca Ianelli, Claudia Melica, Rainer Adolphi, Christoph Halbig, Christoph Schmidt am Busch, Yohichi Kubo, Klaus M. Kodalle,

⁴ Rózsa, *Versöhnung und System*.

⁵ Rózsa, *Hegels Konzeption praktischer Individualität*.

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I dedicate this book to the memory of Manfred Riedel, whose professional friendship I had enjoyed from the mid-nineteen-eighties until his death, and for which I am grateful beyond words. Let me remember him by a personal anecdote. I have been looking for his confession about the German reunification (*Zeitkehre in Deutschland*) for years in vain. Just when I was about to finish the present manuscript, I found his book with a dedication that touches me more now than it did then:

“Es ist aber dem Menschen Gegenwärtiges lieb.” (Hölderlin) Für meine langjährige Philosophenfreundin, Frau Rózsa, mit Dank und guten Wünschen für unsere gemeinsame Zukunft im vereinten Europa! Manfred Riedel, Halle, im Dezember 1994.

Debrecen, Jan 28th 2012

Erzsébet Rózsa

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